The Prometheus Trust

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The Theology of Plato

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The Prometheus Trust was founded in 1986 in order to help reintroduce to educational establishments those true First Principles which have been the basis of all the world's lasting civilisations. These Principles were given their clearest expression in the West by Plato and those great ones who either provided his grounding in Truth or continued and expanded his beautiful exposition of reality. It is for this reason that the Trust is now making available the whole of the published works of Thomas Taylor, the 'English Platonist', whose philosophical understanding of the principles enshrined in the writings of Plato, Proclus, Plotinus and others is unparalleled in recent times.

The Prometheus Trust would like to thank all those who have contributed to the work involved in the Thomas Taylor Series. We are especially indebted to members of **The Platonic Guild** and would recommend this organisation to all those who wish to make a study of this pure philosophy in order to establish the virtuous life.

The Prometheus Trust is a registered educational charity number 299648. All enquiries should be addressed to: Mr T J Addey, Chairman, The Prometheus Trust, Huan House, 17 Rossiters Hill, Frome, Somerset, BA11 4AL.

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Preface to the Thomas Taylor Series

This series makes available all the writings of Thomas Taylor for the first time since his death in 1835. There are several general purposes for the presentation of this series; these are as follows:

Firstly, Thomas Taylor's translations and original writings represent the most comprehensive philosophical re-expression in the English language of the wisdom of European antiquity. Taylor not only understood the *philosophy* of the Platonic tradition but also revered its *religion.* His works draw upon the fragments which survive from the earliest Orphic and Pythagorean mystery schools, through Plato and Aristotle's pure philosophy, and onwards to the later Platonists who were the final flowering of the Classical civilisation. As such, Taylor's work as a whole, when studied patiently, will awaken the mind to reasonable and intuitive truth.

Secondly, it is obvious that while our educational system and institutions have grown out of the Platonic world-view, the clarity of the original vision has been gravely distorted by materialism. Therefore there is an urgent need for a purging of the damaging false opinions now so prevalent in the very institutions which should be leading enquiring minds to the intelligible beauty. The precision and purity of Thomas Taylor's writings will undoubtedly act as such a purgative.

Thirdly, that as the short-comings of the various so-called philosophies of recent centuries are exposed, a re-appraisal of the ancient philosophy prematurely rejected will need to be made. The reasons for this rejection lie in the pressures of the history of past centuries and millennia: In the fullness of time, no doubt, the exploration of empiricists, materialists and reductionists down the dead-end paths of philosophy will be seen as a dialectical testing of the negation of truth and will thus serve a better end than they themselves could imagine. Nevertheless the immediate philosophical inheritance of the twenty-first century is one that is narrow-minded and barren. A new beginning must be made: the depth and breadth of Taylor's writings (a result of a labour of truly Herculean proportions) make them an ideal foundation for a genuine philosophical education. It is to be devoutly hoped that in the not-too-distant future a system of training will be properly established on the principles expounded by the true philosophers of the ancient West, which complement and confirm the teachings of the East. Such a system will lead to a beholding of the highest truths and, ultimately, to the contemplation of Beauty itself. To those who in the future so labour, this series is especially dedicated.

Fourthly, it was almost certainly the wish of Thomas Taylor that a uniform edition of all his writings be published. After his death, his literary executor and friend, Isaac Preston Cory, arranged that his library should be auctioned by Sothebys and the final lot offered at this auction was that of the copyright of all Taylor's writings: the catalogue, which bears the marks of someone who knew Thomas Taylor well, states "The reason of the entire copy-right of all the works being offered for public competition altogether, is, to enable the purchaser to publish his works in a uniform manner....." The copyright was, unfortunately, never bought and the wish has remained, until now, unfulfilled. This series is, then, a small mark of gratitude for his selfless service to Wisdom and to those who love Wisdom.

Aside from these general purposes there are important academic reasons for the presentation of this series: it is of especial interest because Taylor's was the first complete translation into English of Plato and Aristotle along with the major part of the surviving works of the later Platonists. Taylor himself writes from within the so-called neoPlatonic tradition and this further adds to the academic value of his works. There is at present a revival of interest in the later Platonists, whose texts have become the subject of attention of certain leading authorities in the history of philosophy, to such an extent that all the available texts are being collected together, and critically examined and translated. The texts upon which Taylor worked were even more incomplete and full of errors than those which are now available. Where he came across these difficulties, Taylor rectified errors in the original Greek and filled lacunas in the text by conjecturing what, in his view, should have been there. Modern textual evidence points to the fact that he was very largely correct in these conjectures and this, in turn, bears witness to his profound understanding of the philosophy to which he devoted his life. As an aid to academic studies the series will include line and page numbering, such as Stephanus and Bekker, wherever appropriate. The wording of Taylor's books is kept except where there are obvious errors - all of which will be noted.

THOMAS TAYLOR

Born 15 May 1758, London; died 1 November 1835, London.

THOMAS TAYLOR the Platonist was certainly the most extraordinary and admirable philosophic character of modern times. He was the first English translator of the whole of Plato's works, of the whole of Aristotle, and of the majority of the works of Plotinus, Porphyry, Proclus, Iamblichus and the other later Platonists. In his own age he was the subject of the irrational and barbed criticism of pseudo-intellectual popular critics, who failed to perceive that although they may have known more Greek, Taylor knew more Plato. His intuitive appreciation of both the truth and the grandeur of Platonic thought, coupled with its living day-to-day practice, enabled him to undertake and complete a remarkable body of work. When one inspects such a collection of translations and original works, it seems extraordinary that these were the fruits of one self-taught man, labouring under the triple burdens of ill-health, financial insufficience, and negative criticism for most of his exceptional life. His translations and commentaries were the chief source of Greek philosophy to the writers and poets of the Romantic movement, including Blake, Shelley and Wordsworth. In America his works provided the firm foundation for the Transcendentalist movement of R W Emerson and Bronson Alcott; his name was held in higher esteem here than ever it enjoyed in his native England. His living espousal of both the intellectual and religious disciplines of the ancient wisdom, coupled with his philosophical observations on the limitations of Christianity, earned him the mocking title of the "English Pagan". No doubt he would have accepted this as just praise. Taylor's motto, written by himself, was:

> "No servile scribe am I, nor e'er shall be,
> My sire is Mind, whose sons are always free."

His motto is at once both a dedication to the pursuit of Truth, and a rebuttal to his hireling bigoted critics, whose folly he disinisses in these vigorous verses - again, written by himself:

> "Vent'rous I tread in paths untrod before,

And depths immense, and dazzling heights explore;
Anxious from Error's night to point the way
That leads to Wisdom's everlasting day;
To check my flight in vain blind Folly tries,
For, Heav'n my friend, I conquer as I rise."

Thomas Taylor was not only a scholar of a high order, but also an ardent philosopher in spirit and in energy. His love of wisdom dominated every last element of his life and developed an insight into the esoteric meaning of Greek philosophy that has never been equalled nor approached by any scholar of modern times. There may be 'easier' or more readily accessible translations of the sacred works of the Platonic tradition, but there are none more consistently reliable nor more replete with that profound understanding which comes from elevation of mind and inspiration alone.

Thomas Taylor was in truth "an exile straying from the orb of Light," and his epitaph, written by himself, sums up the dedication and course of his life:

"Health, strength, and ease, and manhood's active age,
Freely I gave to Plato's sacred page.
With Truth's pure joys, with Fame my days were crown'd
Tho' Fortune adverse on my labours frown'd."†

Thomas Taylor dedicated his works to the 'sacred majesty of Truth' - a great and noble cause for a great and noble soul.

† The three verses quoted can be found in Thomas Moore-Johnson's *Life of Thomas Taylor* which appeared in the journal *The Platonist.*

THE THEOLOGY

OF PLATO

INTRODUCTION

By The Prometheus Trust

The following work is one of the most profound and sacred products that an inspired human intellect has ever produced. Though little known, the importance of this magnificent exposition of theology, at once both Platonic and universal, can never be overstated, as it is an extraordinary and lucid blend of pure philosophy, religion, and science, in all of which the divine Proclus was an adept. Earlier volumes in this series have shown that the mythology of the Greeks is neither a collection of fantasy tales, nor merely a form of anthropomorphic or cosmic symbolism and allegory, but that it is a body of images replete with the most spiritual and arcane truths which defy commonplace modes of expression. Plato concealed very well his personal teaching and theological interpretation of this mythology, and it was the work of Proclus, the Platonic Successor, to bring to consummation the evolving revelation of Plato's theology as the last great Platonist to chair the philosophic school in Athens. As Proclus himself says on page 1 of this work: "But I particularly think that the mystic doctrine respecting divine concerns, which is purely established on a sacred foundation, and which perpetually subsists with the Gods themselves, became thence apparent to such as are capable of enjoying it for a time, through one man (Plato), whom I should not err in calling the primary leader and hierophant of those true mysteries, into which souls separated from terrestrial places are initiated, and of those entire and stable visions, which those participate who genuinely embrace a happy and blessed life. But this philosophy shone forth at first from him so venerably and arcanely, as if established in sacred temples, and within their adyta, and being unknown to many who have entered into these holy places, in certain orderly periods of time, proceeded as much as was possible for it into light, through certain true priests, and who embraced a life corresponding to the tradition of such mystic concerns. It appears

likewise to me, that the whole place became splendid, and that illuminations of divine spectacles every where presented themselves to the view."

The Theology of Plato is an essentially religious work, and ranks with the very best of the sacred teachings of all nations. It is, in reality, a monumental and near perfect attempt to express in a manner accessible to the reasoning mind, the universal order of all things. As such, Proclus' masterpiece is pan-cosmic in its scope, illuminating the principles which produce, vivify, and perfect the whole of Being, Life, Intellect, Soul, Nature, and Body, as well as their parts; whilst suspending all of these from one exempt and superessential Unity, called The One and The Good, from which all things can be seen as proceeding, and to which all things desire to return. This is the simple pattern Proclus adopts throughout the whole of *The Theology of Plato*.

The absence of a scientific theology in the Christian religion, and in others, produces an inexplicable gap or vacuum between the one God (upon which all religions agree) and his ultimate creations. But if man, and therefore the universe, is made in the image of God; and if all living things effect to generate offspring similar to themselves, this one God must be more prolific and perfect in the generation of similars than any and all of his creations, and these offspring will be legitimately named Gods. Thus the vacuum is filled through the progressive generations of divinity, producing and permeating every sphere of existence, life, and intelligence. Yet the exempt transcendency of The One is referred to continuously in this Theology; and Thomas Taylor points this out in gentle caution: "It must not be supposed, that the Gods are nothing more than so many attributes of the First Cause; for if this were the case, the First God would be multitude, but the one must always be prior to the many. But the Gods, though they are profoundly united with their ineffable cause, are at the same time self-perfect essences; for the First Cause is prior to self-perfection. Hence, as the First Cause is superessential, all the Gods, from their union through the summits or blossoms of their natures with this incomprehensible God, will be likewise superessential; in the same manner as trees from being rooted in the earth are all of them earthly in an eminent degree. And as in this instance the earth itself is essentially distinct from the trees which it contains, so the highest God is transcendently distinct from the multitude of Gods which he ineffably comprehends."

This is the only English translation of *The Theology of Plato*; and as such, we owe an inestimable debt of gratitude to Thomas Taylor for leaving to all future generations a great key to the understanding of the

nature of the Gods, the cosmos, and the nature and destiny of man. No other translation could so accurately and beautifully express the intentions of the original's author, unless the translator not only profoundly understood this Theology, but also believed it in the depth of his soul - both of which Thomas Taylor possessed to a very high degree. The seventh Book, which Thomas Taylor added to supply the want of the original, completes the total sweep of this Platonic Theology, and no editions of this work would be complete or useful without it.

The Prometheus Trust is delighted to present *The Six Books of Proclus On The Theology of Plato* to the general public for the first time since 1816. It is indeed a most sacred theology dealing with the most profound of ideas, written by Proclus to be an aid and a vision for all mankind. His own words, in the beginning of his Commentary on The Parmenides, sum up his view of the Platonic Philosophy and Theology: "FOR, WITH RESPECT TO THIS TYPE OF PHILOSOPHY, I SHOULD SAY, THAT IT CAME TO MEN FOR THE BENEFIT OF TERRESTRIAL SOULS; THAT IT MIGHT BE INSTEAD OF STATUES, INSTEAD OF TEMPLES, INSTEAD OF THE WHOLE OF SACRED INSTITUTIONS, AND THE LEADER OF SAFETY BOTH TO THE MEN THAT NOW ARE, AND TO THOSE THAT SHALL EXIST HEREAFTER."

It is in this spirit that this work is now presented.

Changes to the original text

i. Where Taylor had *the one, the one itself, the good* or *the good itself* this edition gives these names capital initials; this to distinguish them as the highest names the Platonists gave to God. Other principles have been left in lower case.

ii. A few very obvious grammatical errors and archaic spellings have been corrected; wherever there is any doubt as to the validity of possible errors the original has been followed.

iii. We have followed Taylor's explicit method of printing Greek characters without accents or breathings (see his defence of his Greek at the end of his *The Fable of Cupid and Psyche* and also his reference to this in the Introduction of *Proclus' Commentary on Euclid*).

iv. Some references to works quoted are added, and some original references are given more precise indicators.

v. There are two minor changes to the text, as detailed in footnotes.

vi. Page numbers in references: Taylor normally quotes page numbers to his own works whenever he refers to texts he had already published and these we have kept (*i.e.* they refer to the original publications' numbering). However, in cases where works have been republished in this Thomas Taylor Series we have changed these page numbers so that they refer to the numbering within the Series; see over for a full list of these works.

* * *

The three quotes in the Trust's introduction are from Chapter I of Book I of this work; from a footnote from Taylor's translation of Sallust *On the Gods and the World* (TTS. vol. IV, page 5); and from Proclus' *Commentary on the Parmenides* (Book I, 618.)

The Thomas Taylor Series

Volume I - *Proclus' Elements of Theology.*

Volume II - *Select Works of Porphyry.*

Abstinence from Animal Food; Auxiliaries to the Perception of Intelligibles; Concerning Homer's Cave of the Nymphs; Taylor on the Wanderings of Ulysses.

Volume III - *Collected Writings of Plotinus.*

Twenty-seven treatises, being all the writings of Plotinus translated by Taylor.

Volume IV - *Collected Writings on the Gods and the World.*

Sallust On the Gods and the World; The Sentences of Demophilus; Ocellus on the Nature of the Universe; Taurus and Proclus on the Eternity of the World; Maternus on the Thema Mundi; The Emperor Julian's Orations to the Mother of Gods and to the Sovereign Sun; Synesius on Providence; Taylor's essays on the Mythology and the Theology of the Greeks.

Volume V - *Hymns and Initiations.*

The Hymns of Orpheus together with all the published hymns translated or written by Taylor; Taylor's essay on Orpheus.

Volume VI - *The Dissertations of Maximus Tyrius.*

Forty-one treatises from the middle Platonist, and an essay from Taylor - The Triumph of the Wise Man over Fortune.

Volume VII - *Mysteries and Oracles.*

A Collection of Chaldean Oracles; Essays on the Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries; The History of the Restoration of the Platonic Theology; An essay on A Platonic Demonstration of the Immortality of the Soul.

Contents of the Chapters of the Seven Books

Book I

Chapter I 51

The preface, in which the scope of the treatise is unfolded, together with the praise of Plato himself, and of those that received the philosophy from him.

Chapter II 53

What the mode of the discussion is in the present treatise, and what preparation of the auditors of it is previously necessary.

Chapter III 55

What a theologist is according to Plato, whence he begins, as far as to what hypostases he ascends, and according to what power of the soul he particularly energizes.

Chapter IV 59

The theological types or forms according to all which Plato disposes the doctrine concerning the Gods.

Chapter V 62

What the dialogues are from which the theology of Plato may especially be assumed; and to what orders of Gods each of these dialogues refers us.

Chapter VI 64

An objection against collecting the Platonic theology from many dialogues, in consequence of its being partial, and distributed into minute parts.

Chapter VII 67

A solution of the before mentioned objection, referring to one dialogue, the *Parmenides*, the whole truth concerning the Gods according to Plato.

Chapter VIII 68

An enumeration of the different opinions concerning the *Parmenides*, and a division of the objections to them.

Chapter IX 69

A confutation of those who assert that the *Parmenides* is a logical dialogue, and who admit that the discussion in it is argumentative, proceeding through subjects of opinion.

Chapter X 72

How far they are right who assert that the hypotheses of the *Parmenides* are concerning the principles of things, and what is to be added to what they say from the doctrine of our preceptor [Syrianus.]

Chapter XI 76

Many demonstrations concerning the conclusions of the second hypothesis, and of the division of it according to the divine orders.

Chapter XII 82

The intention of the hypotheses, demonstrating their connexion with each other, and their consent with the things themselves.†

Chapter XIII 84

What the common rules concerning the Gods are, which Plato delivers in the *Laws*. And also concerning the hyparxis of the Gods, their providence, and their immutable perfection.

Chapter XIV 90

How the hyparxis of the Gods is delivered in the *Laws*, and through what media the discourse recurs to the truly existing Gods. How the providence of the Gods is demonstrated in the *Laws*, and what the mode of their providence is according to Plato.‡

Chapter XV 96

Through what arguments in the same treatise [the *Laws*] it is demonstrated that the Gods provide [for all things,] immutably.

Chapter XVI 98

What the axioms are concerning the Gods which are delivered in the *Republic*, and what order they have with respect to each other.

Chapter XVII 99

What the goodness of the Gods is, and how they are said to be the cause of all good; and that evil according to every hypostasis is itself adorned and arranged by the Gods.

Chapter XVIII 103

What the immutability is of the Gods; where also it is shown what their self-sufficiency, and firm impassivity are; and how we are to understand their possessing an invariable sameness of subsistence.

Chapter XIX 106

What the simplicity is of the Gods; and how that which is simple in them appears to be various in secondary natures.

† The 12th chapter is not marked in the original; but it begins conformably to my translation.

‡ The 15th chapter also is not marked in the original; and is comprehended in my translation in the 14th chapter. Perhaps it should begin at the words, "If therefore the Gods produce all things," on p. 91.

Chapter XX 108

What the truth is of the Gods; and whence falsehood is introduced in the participation of the Gods by secondary natures.

Chapter XXI 110

From the axioms in the *Phædrus* concerning every thing divine [it follows] that every thing divine is beautiful, wise, and good.

Chapter XXII 111

A discussion of the dogmas concerning the goodness [of the Gods,] and an investigation of the elements of the good in the *Philebus*.

Chapter XXIII 113

What the wisdom of the Gods is, and what elements of it may be assumed from Plato.

Chapter XXIV 114

Concerning divine beauty, and the elements of it, as delivered by Plato.

Chapter XXV 116

What the triad is which is conjoined with the good, the wise, and the beautiful, and what auxiliaries to the theory of it, Plato affords us.†

Chapter XXVI 118

Concerning the axioms delivered in the *Phædo*,‡ respecting an invisible nature. What the divine nature is. What the immortal, and the intelligible§ are; and what order these possess with reference to each other.

Chapter XXVII 121

What the uniform and indissoluble are, and how sameness of subsistence [and the unbegotten are] to be assumed in divine natures.

Chapter XXVIII 123

How paternal, and how maternal causes are to be assumed in the Gods.

Chapter XXIX 124

Concerning divine names, and the rectitude of them as delivered in the *Cratylus*.

† Such is the title in the Greek, which is obviously erroneous. For the proper title is, "What that is which unites us to *The Good*; and that it is divine faith." What is said indeed in the Greek to be the contents of this, belong to the preceding chapter.

‡ For εν φαιδρῳ it is necessary to read εν παιδωνι.

§ In the Greek το μονοειδες *the uniform*, but it should evidently be το νοητον, *the intelligible*.

Book Two

Chapter I 126

A method leading to the superessential principle of all things, according to the intellectual conception of *The One* and the multitude.

Chapter II 133

A second method unfolding the hypostasis of *The One*, and demonstrating it to be exempt from all corporeal and incorporeal essences.

Chapter III 139

Many arguments in confirmation of the same thing, and evincing the irreprehensible hypothesis of *The One*.

Chapter IV 145

A confutation of those who say that the first principle is not according to Plato above intellect, and demonstrations from the *Republic*, the *Sophista*, the *Philebus*, and the *Parmenides*, of the superessential hypostasis† of *The One*.

Chapter V 149

What the modes are of ascent to *The One* according to Plato; and that the modes are two, through analogy, and through negations. Likewise, where Plato treats of each of these, and through what cause.

Chapter VI 150

By what, and by how many names Plato unfolds the ineffable principle, and why he unfolds it by such and by so many names. And how these names accord with the modes of ascent to it.

Chapter VII 153

What assertions are in the *Republic* concerning the first principle, through its analogy to the sun; where also it is shown, how it is celebrated as the good, and as the most splendid of being. How the sun is the offspring of the good; and that according to each order of divine natures, there is a monad analogous to the first principle. And how the first principle is the cause of all beings, and is itself prior to power and energy.

Chapter VIII 158

What Plato in his Epistle to Dionysius says the first king is. And admonitions, that the first God is discussed in that Epistle.

Chapter IX 161

What the three conceptions are which are delivered [in that Epistle] concerning the first king. How all things are about him. How all things are for his sake.

† For *υποθεσεως* I read *υποστασεως*.

How he is the cause of all beautiful things. What the order is of these conceptions. And from what hypotheses they are assumed.

Chapter X 164

How in the first hypothesis of the *Parmenides*, Plato delivers the doctrine concerning *The One*, employing for this purpose negations. And on what account the negations are such and so many.

Chapter XI 166

How it is necessary to enter on the theory concerning *The One*, through negations. And what disposition of the soul is most adapted to discussions of this kind.

Chapter XII 167

A celebration of *The One*, demonstrating through negative conclusions that it is exempt from all the orders of beings, according to the order delivered in the *Parmenides*.

Book Three

In this work the first four chapters of the Greek are gathered into one (the first); the fifth and sixth into the second; the seventh and eighth form the third chapter; thus the original ninth is here the fourth, the tenth is the fifth and so on. The original chapter numbers are given in brackets.

Chapter I 173

(i) That after the discussion in common of the one principle of things, it is requisite to treat of the divine orders, and to show how many they are, and how they are divided from each other.
(ii) That the multitude of unities according to which the Gods have their hypostasis, subsists after *The One*.
(iii) How many the particulars are which ought to be demonstrated previous to the discovery of the multitude of the divine orders, and an uninterrupted narration of the doctrine of these.
(iv) That all the unities are participable. And that there is only one *truly* superessential one; but that all the other unities are participated by essences.

Chapter II 180

(v) That the participations of the unities which are nearer to *The One*, proceed into more simple hypostases; but the participations of those that are remote from *The One*, proceed into more composite hypostases.
(vi) What the natures are which participate of the divine unities, and what the order of them is with respect to each other. And that being indeed, is the most ancient of these; life, the second; intellect, the third; soul, the fourth; and body, the last. And that there are also as many orders of the divine unities.

Chapter III 188

(vii) A resumption of the doctrine concerning *The One*, and a discussion of the biformed principles posterior to *The One*.

(viii) What the two principles are of all things posterior to *The One*; how Socrates in the *Philebus* calls them bound and infinity; and of what things they are the causes† to beings.

Chapter IV 192

(ix) What the third thing is which is produced from the two principles. Why Socrates in the *Philebus* calls it that which is mixed. That it is nothing else than that which is primary being.‡ And how this proceeds from the two principles, and from *The One*.

Chapter V 196

(x) How from images also, it may be inferred, that the first thing which subsists from bound and infinity is being. How this may be demonstrated. And how bound and infinity are twofold; one order of these subsisting in being, but the other existing prior to being.

Chapter VI 197

(xi) What the triad is, which Socrates in the *Philebus* says is inherent in every thing that is mixed.

Chapter VII 199

(xii) Concerning the first intelligible triad in common; and how the second triad proceeds analogous to this.§

Chapter VIII 199

(xiii) What the second intelligible triad is. A more accurate account of it, as subsisting from that which predominates, from that which is participated, and from that which characterizes the mixture.

Chapter IX 201

(xiv) What the third intelligible triad is; what that is which predominates, and is participated in this. And at the end, a discourse in common concerning the distinction of the three triads.

Chapter X 204

(xv) How the intelligible triads are delivered in the *Timæus*. And many admonitions concerning animal itself, [evincing] that it has the third order of intelligence.

† For *ουσιαι* it is necessary to read *αιτιαι*.

‡ For *εν*, it is necessary to read *ον*.

§ It appears from this account of the contents of the 12th chapter, that a considerable part is wanting in the original; because nothing is said in it about the manner in which the second triad proceeds analogous to the first.

Chapter XI 205

(xvi) Many demonstrations that eternity subsists according to the middle order of intelligibles.

Chapter XII 207

(xvii) That the one in which eternity abides is the summit of intelligibles.

Chapter XIII 208

(xviii) Concerning all the intelligible orders in common, according to the doctrine of Timæus. And a more accurate account of the peculiarities in the intelligible triads.

Chapter XIV 211

(xix) Concerning intelligible forms, and the doctrine unfolding the peculiarity of them. How likewise they are four, and from what causes they subsist.

Chapter XV 213

(xx) That also from what is said in the *Sophista*, it is possible to discover the three intelligible orders; *viz.* in that part of the *Sophista*, in which it is shown what *the one being*, what *whole*, and what *all* are.

Chapter XVI 217

(xxi) A summary account of what has been said concerning the intelligible triads. And admonitions from Plato that it is possible to divide them into father, power and intellect.

Chapter XVII 221

(xxii) How in the *Phædrus* it is said that every thing divine is beautiful, wise, and good. What triple elements of each of these Plato delivers. And how from these it is possible to accede to the union and separation of the intelligible triads.

Chapter XVIII 222

(xxiii) How Parmenides delivers the multitude of Gods in the second hypothesis. And how we should discourse about each order of them, employing for this purpose the conclusions of that hypothesis.

Chapter XIX 224

(xxiv) What the first intelligible triad is according to Parmenides. Whence he begins, and how far he proceeds, teaching concerning it.

Chapter XX 225

(xxv) What the second intelligible triad is. And how it is delivered by Parmenides in continuity with the triad prior to it. And how far he produces the discourse concerning it.

Chapter XXI 227

(xxvi) What the third intelligible triad is. And how Parmenides unfolds it through the third conclusion.

Chapter XXII 229

(xxvii) Concerning the three conclusions in common, through which the three orders of intelligibles are characterized. And how through these it is possible to dissolve the most difficult of theological doubts.

Chapter XXIII 233

(xxviii) A celebration of the intelligible Gods, unfolding at the same time the union of intelligibles themselves with the good, and their exempt hyparxis.

Book Four

Chapter I 235

What the peculiarity is of the intelligible and intellectual Gods. How they illuminate imparticipable life, and are in conformity with the intelligible Gods.

Chapter II 237

How the intelligible and intellectual Gods subsist from the intelligible Gods. And how they communicate with the intelligible Gods.

Chapter III 239

What the division is of the intelligible and intellectual Gods according to triads. And what the difference is of these triads with respect to the intelligible triads.

Chapter IV 242

How Socrates in the *Phædrus* leads us to this order of Gods.

Chapter V 243

That it is not proper to understand the Heaven, and celestial circulation [celebrated in the *Phædrus*] as pertaining to sensibles; and many admonitions from the Platonic words themselves, that these are to be referred to the first order of Heaven.

Chapter VI 245

That the supercelestial place is not simply intelligible; but demonstrations from what is delivered about it [in the *Phædrus*,] that it is allotted an intelligible order as in intellectuals.

Chapter VII 246

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† The contents of chapter thirty-seven in the original erroneously form the conclusion of the contents of chapter thirty-six. And instead of ως την ακροτητα, it is therefore necessary to read πως την ακροτητα. Hence what are marked as χεφ. λζ, and χεφ. λη and χεφ. λθ should be marked χεφ. λη, χεφ. λθ, and χεφ μ. It will be found also that chapter forty is wanting.

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INTRODUCTION

I rejoice in the opportunity which is afforded me of presenting the *truly* philosophic reader, in the present work, with a treasure of Grecian theology; of a theology, which was first mystically and symbolically promulgated by Orpheus, afterwards disseminated enigmatically through images by Pythagoras, and in the last place scientifically unfolded by Plato and his genuine disciples. The peculiarity indeed, of this theology is, that it is no less scientific than sublime; and that by a geometrical series of reasoning originating from the most self-evident truths, it develops all the deified progressions from the ineffable principle of things, and accurately exhibits to our view all the links of that golden chain of which deity is the one extreme, and body the other.

That also which is most admirable and laudable in this theology is, that it produces in the mind properly prepared for its reception the most pure, holy, venerable, and exalted conceptions of the great cause of all. For it celebrates this immense principle as something superior even to being itself; as exempt from the whole of things, of which it is nevertheless ineffably the source, and does not therefore think fit to connumerate it with any triad, or order of beings. Indeed, it even apologises for attempting to give an appropriate name to this principle, which is in reality ineffable, and ascribes the attempt to the imbecility of human nature, which striving intently to behold it, gives the appellation of the most simple of its conceptions to that which is beyond all knowledge and all conception. Hence it denominates it *The One*, and *The Good;* by the former of these names indicating its transcendent simplicity, and by the latter its subsistence as the object of desire to all beings. For all things desire good. At the same time however, it asserts that these appellations are in reality nothing more than the parturitions of the soul which standing as it were in the vestibules of the adytum of deity, announce nothing pertaining to the ineffable, but only indicate her spontaneous tendencies towards it, and belong rather to the immediate offspring of the first God, than to the first itself.

Hence, as the result of this most venerable conception of the supreme, when it ventures not only to denominate the ineffable, but also to assert something of its relation to other things, it considers this as pre-eminently its peculiarity, that it is the principle of principles; it being necessary that the characteristic property of principle, after the same manner as other things, should not begin from multitude, but should be collected into one monad as a summit, and which is the principle of all principles. Conformably to this, Proclus, in the second book of this

work[†] says, with matchless magnificence of diction: "Let us as it were celebrate the first God, not as establishing the earth and the heavens, nor as giving subsistence to souls, and the generation of all animals; for he produced these indeed, but among the last of things; but prior to these, let us celebrate him as unfolding into light the whole intelligible and intellectual genus of Gods, together with all the supermundane and mundane divinities - as the God of all Gods, the unity of all unities, and beyond the first adyta,[‡] - as more ineffable than all silence, and more unknown than all essence, - as holy among the holies, and concealed in the intelligible Gods."

The scientific reasoning from which this dogma is deduced is the following: As the principle of all things is *The One,* it is necessary that the progression of beings should be continued, and that no vacuum should intervene either in incorporeal or corporeal natures. It is also necessary that every thing which has a natural progression should proceed through similitude. In consequence of this, it is likewise necessary that every producing principle should generate a number of the same order with itself, *viz. nature,* a natural number; *soul,* one that is psychical (*i.e.* belonging to soul); and *intellect,* an intellectual number. For if whatever possesses a power of generating, generates similars prior to dissimilars, every cause must deliver its own form and characteristic peculiarity to its progeny; and before it generates that which gives subsistence to progressions far distant and separate from its nature, it must constitute things proximate to itself according to essence, and conjoined with it through similitude. It is therefore necessary from these premises, since there is one unity the principle of the universe, that this unity should produce from itself, prior to every thing else, a multitude of natures characterised by unity, and a number the most of all things allied to its cause; and these natures are no other than the Gods.

According to this theology therefore, from the immense principle of principles, in which all things causally subsist, absorbed in superessential light, and involved in unfathomable depths, a beauteous progeny of principles proceed, all largely partaking of the ineffable, all stamped with the occult characters of deity, all possessing an overflowing fullness of good. From these dazzling summits, these ineffable blossoms, these divine propagations, being, life, intellect, soul, nature and body depend;

[†] See page 166.

[‡] *i.e.* The highest order of intelligibles.

monads suspended from *unities*, deified natures proceeding from deities. Each of these monads too, is the leader of a series which extends from itself to the last of things, and which while it proceeds from, at the same time abides in, and returns to its leader. And all these principles and all their progeny are finally centred and rooted by their summits in the first great all-comprehending one. Thus all beings proceed from, and are comprehended in the first being; all intellects emanate from one first intellect; all souls from one first soul; all natures blossom from one first nature; and all bodies proceed from the vital and luminous body of the world. And lastly, all these great monads are comprehended in the first one, from which both they and all their depending series are unfolded into light. Hence this first one is truly the unity of unities, the monad of monads, the principle of principles, the God of Gods, one and all things, and yet one prior to all.

No objections of any weight, no arguments but such as are sophistical, can be urged against this most sublime theory which is so congenial to the unperverted conceptions of the human mind, that it can only be treated with ridicule and contempt in degraded, barren, and barbarous ages. Ignorance and priestcraft, however, have hitherto conspired to defame those inestimable works,† in which this and many other grand and important dogmas can alone be found; and the theology of the Greeks has been attacked with all the insane fury of ecclesiastical zeal, and all the imbecil flashes of mistaken wit, by men whose conceptions on the subject, like those of a man between sleeping and waking, have been *turbid and wild, phantastic and confused, preposterous and vain.*

Indeed, that after the great incomprehensible cause of all, a divine multitude subsists, co-operating with this cause in the production and government of the universe, has always been, and is still admitted by all nations, and all religions, however much they may differ in their opinions respecting the nature of the subordinate deities, and the veneration which is to be paid to them by man; and however barbarous the conceptions of some nations on this subject may be when compared with those of others. Hence, says the elegant Maximus Tyrius, "You will see one according law and assertion in all the earth, that there is one God, the king and father of all things, and many Gods, sons of God, ruling together with him. This the Greek says, and the Barbarian says, the inhabitant of the Continent, and he who dwells near the sea, the wise and the unwise. And if you proceed as far as to the utmost shores

† *Viz.* the present and other works of Proclus, together with those of Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblichus, Syrianus, Ammonius, Damascius, Olympiodorus, and Simplicius.

of the ocean, there also there are Gods, rising very near to some, and setting very near to others."† This dogma, too, is so far from being opposed by either the Old or New Testament, that it is admitted by both, though it forbids the religious veneration of the inferior deities, and enjoins the worship of one God alone, whose portion is Jacob, and Israel the line of his inheritance. The following testimonies will, I doubt not, convince the liberal reader of the truth of this assertion.

In the first place it appears from the 32nd chapter of Deuteronomy, v. 8 in the Septuagint version, that "*the division of the nations was made according to the number of the angels of God,*" and not according to the number of the children of Israel, as the present Hebrew text asserts. This reading was adopted by the most celebrated fathers of the Christian church, such as, among the Greeks, Origen, Basil and Chrysostom, and among the Latins, Jerom and Gregory. That this too, is the genuine reading, is evident from the 4th chapter of the same book and the 19th verse, in which it is said, "And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun and the moon, and the stars, *even* all the host of heaven, shouldst be driven to worship them, and serve them, *which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven.*" Here it is said that the stars are divided to all the nations, which is equivalent to saying that the nations were divided according to the number of the stars; the Jewish legislator at the same time, considering his own nation as an exception, and as being under the government of the God of Israel alone. For in the following verse it is added, "But the Lord hath taken you (*i.e.* the Jews), and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, *even* out of Egypt, to be unto him a people of inheritance, as *ye* are to this day." By the angels of God therefore (in Deuteron. 32 v. 8) the stars are signified; and these in the same book (chapter 17 v. 3) are expressly called Gods; "And hath gone and served other Gods, and worshipped them, *either the sun or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded.*" In the 3rd chapter also, and the 24th verse, it is implied in the question which is there asked, that the God of the Jews is superior to all the celestial and terrestrial Gods "For what God is there *in heaven, or in earth*, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?" As the

† Ενα ιδιος αν εν πασα γη ομοφωνον και λογον, οτι θιος εις παντων βασιλευς και πατηρ, και θεου πολλοι, θεου παιδες, συναρχοντες θεφ. Ταυτα και ο ελλην λεγει, και ο βαρβαρος λεγει, και ο ηπειρωτης και ο θαλαττιος, και ο σοφος και ο ασοφος. Καν επι του ωκιανου ελθης τ ας ηϊονας, κακει θεοι, τοις μεν ανισχοντες αγχου μαλα, τοις δε καταδυομενοι. Dissert. I. Edit. Princ. [See TTS vol. VI.]

attention of the Jews was solely confined to the worship of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, they but little regarded the powers whom they conceived to be subordinate to this God, and considering all of them as merely the messengers of their God, they gave them the general appellation of *angels;* though as we shall shortly prove from the testimony of the Apostle Paul, they were not consistent in confounding *angels* properly so called with *Gods.*

But that the stars are not called Gods by the Jewish legislator as things inanimate like statues fashioned of wood or stone, is evident from what is said in the book of Job, and the Psalms: "Behold even the moon and it shineth not, yea the stars are not pure in his sight. How much less man that is a worm, and the son of man which is a worm?" (Job xxv v. 5 and 6.) And, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him." (Psalm viii v. 3 and 4.) It is evident therefore from these passages, that the heavens and the stars are more excellent than man; but nothing inanimate can be more excellent than that which is animated. To which may be added, that in the following verse David says, that God has made man a little lower than the angels. But the stars, as we have shown, were considered by Moses as angels and Gods; and consequently, they are animated beings, and superior to man.

Farther still, in the Septuagint version of verse the 4th of the 19th Psalm, God is said *to have placed his tabernacle in the sun,* (*εν τω ηλιω εθετο το σκηνωμα αυτου* which is doubtless the genuine reading, and not that of the vulgar translation, "In them (*i.e.* the heavens) hath he set a tabernacle for the sun." For this is saying nothing more of the sun than what may be said of any of the other stars, and produces in us no exalted conception of the artificer of the universe. But to say that God dwells in the sun, gives us a magnificent idea both of that glorious luminary, and the deity who dwells enshrined, as it were, in dazzling splendour. To which we may add in confirmation of this version of the Septuagint, that in Psalm xi v. 4. it is said, "The Lord's *throne* is in *heaven.* And again in Isaiah lxvi v. 1. "Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool." If therefore the heavens are the throne, and the sun the tabernacle of deity, they must evidently be deified. For nothing can come into immediate contact with divinity without being divine. Hence, says Simplicius,† "That it is connascent with the human soul to think the celestial bodies are divine, is especially

† In his commentary on the second book of Aristotle's treatise *On the Heavens.*

evident from those, (the Jews) who look to these bodies through preconceptions about divine natures. For they also say that the heavens are the habitation of God, and the throne of God, and are alone sufficient to reveal the glory and excellence of God to those who are worthy; than which assertions what can be more venerable?"

Indeed, that the heavens are not the inanimate throne and residence of deity, is also evident from the assertion in the 19th Psalm, "That the heavens *declare* the glory of God." For R. Moses, a very learned Jew, says,† "that the word *saphar,* to *declare* or *set forth* is never attributed to things inanimate." Hence he concludes, "that the heavens are not without some soul, which, says he, is no other than that of those blessed intelligences, who govern the stars, and dispose them into such letters as God has ordained; declaring unto us men by means of this writing, what events we are to expect. And hence, this same writing is called by all the ancients, *chetab hamelachim,* that is to say, *the writing of the angels.*"

The Gods, therefore, which were distributed to all the nations but the Jews, were the sun and moon, and the other celestial bodies, yet not so far as they are bodies, but so far as they are animated beings. Hence the Hebrew prophets never reprobate and prohibit the worship of the stars as things which neither see, nor hear, nor understand, as they do the worship of statues. Thus in Deuteron. iv. and 28. "And there ye shall serve Gods the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear, nor eat, nor smell." And the Psalmist, "They have a mouth but speak not, etc." These, and many other things of the like kind are said by the prophets of the Jews against the worship of images and statues, but never of the sun and moon, and the other stars. But when they blame the worship of the heavenly bodies, they assign as the cause that the people of Israel are not attributed to them as other nations are, in consequence of being the inheritance of the God that brought them out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage. This is evident from the before cited passage in the 4th chapter of Deuteronomy, in which it is said that the stars are divided into all nations under the whole heaven but the Jews.

Indeed, as the emperor Julian‡ justly observes, "unless a certain ethnarchic God presides over every nation, and under this God there is an angel, a dæmon, and a peculiar genus of souls, subservient and

† See Gaffarel's *Unheard-of Curiosities,* p.391.

‡ Apud Cyril.

ministrant to more excellent natures, from which the difference in laws and manners arises, - unless this is admitted, let it be shown by any other how this difference is produced. For it is not sufficient to say, "God said, and it was done," but it is requisite that the natures of things which are produced should accord with the mandates of divinity. But I will explain more clearly what I mean. God, for instance, commanded that fire should tend upward, and earthly masses downward; is it not therefore requisite, in order that the mandate of God may be accomplished, that the former should be light, and the latter heavy? Thus also in a similar manner in other things. Thus too, in divine concerns. But the reason of this is, because the human race is frail and corruptible. Hence also, the works of man are corruptible and mutable, and subject to all-various revolutions. But God being eternal, it is also fit that his mandates should be eternal. And being such, they are either the natures of things, or conformable to the natures of things. For how can nature contend with the mandate of divinity? How can it fall off from this concord? If, therefore, as he ordered that there should be a confusion of tongues, and that they should not accord with each other, so likewise he ordered that the political concerns of nations should be discordant; he has not only effected this by his mandate, but has rendered us naturally adapted to this dissonance. For to effect this, it would be requisite, in the first place, that the natures of those should be different, whose political concerns among nations are to be different. This, indeed, is seen in bodies, if any one directs his attention to the Germans and Scythians, and considers how much the bodies of those differ from those of the Lybians and Ethiopians. Is this therefore, a mere mandate, and does the air contribute nothing, nor the relation and position of the region with respect to the celestial bodies?

Julian adds, "Moses, however, though he knew the truth of this, concealed it; nor does he ascribe the confusion of tongues to God alone. For he says, that not only God descended, nor one alone with him, but many, though he does not say who they were. But it is very evident, that he conceived those who descended with God to be similar to him. If, therefore, not the Lord only, but those who were with him contributed to this confusion of tongues, they may justly be considered as the causes of this dissonance."

In short, that the heavens and the celestial bodies are animated by certain divine souls, was not only the opinion of the ancient poets and philosophers, but also of the most celebrated fathers of the church, and the most learned and acute of the schoolmen. Thus for instance, this is asserted by Jerom in his exposition of the 6th verse of the first chapter

of Ecclesiastes. And by Origen in his book *On Principles*, who says that the heavenly bodies must be animated, because they are said to receive the mandates of God, which is only consentaneous to a rational nature. This too is asserted by Eusebius in his Theological Solutions, and by Augustine in his Enchiridion. Among the schoolmen too, this was the opinion of Albertus Magnus in his book De quatuor qutuor Coæquævis; of Thomas Aquinas in his treatise De Spiritualibus Creaturis; and of Johannes Scotus Super Secundo Sententiarum. To these likewise may be added, the most learned Cardinal Nicolaus Cusanus. Aureolus indeed strenuously contends for the truth of this opinion, and does not even think it improper to venerate the celestial bodies with outward worship (duliæ cultu) and to implore their favour and assistance. And Thomas Aquinas says, that he has no other objection to this than that it might be the occasion of idolatry. Hence, though it may seem ridiculous to most of the present time, that divine souls should be placed in the stars, and preside over regions and cities, tribes and people, nations and tongues, yet it did not appear so to the more intelligent Christians of former times.

I had almost forgotten however the wisest of the ancient Christians, but as he was the best of them, I have done well in reserving him to the last; and this is no other than the Platonic bishop Synesius. This father of the church therefore, in his third hymn, sings as follows:

Σε, πατερ κοσμων,
πατερ αιωνων,
αυτουργε θεων,
ευαγες αινειν.
σε μεν οι νοεροι
μελπουσιν, αναξ,
σε δε κοσμαγοι,
ομματολαμπεις,
νοες αστεριοι,
ομνουσι μακαρ,
ους περι κλεινον
σωμα χορευει.
πασα σε μελπει
γενεα μακαρων.
οι περι κοσμον,
οι κατα κοσμον,
οι ζωναιοι,
οι τ' αζωνοι
κοσμου κοιρας

εφεπουσι, σοφοι
αμφιβατηρες,
οι παρα κλεινους
οιηκοφορους
ους αγγελικα
προχεει σειρα
το, τε κυδηεν
γενος ηρωων,
εργα τα θνητων
κρυφιαισιν οδοις
διανισσομενον,
εργα βροτεια
ψυχα τ' ακλινης,
και κλινομενα
ες μελαναυγεις
χθονιους ογκους

viz. "Thee, father of the worlds, father of the æones,† artificer of the *Gods*, it is holy to praise. Thee, O king, the intellectual Gods sing, thee, O blessed God, the *Cosmagi*, those fulgic eyes, and starry intellects, celebrate, round which the illustrious body [of the world] dances. All the race of the blessed sing thy praise, those that are about, and those that are in the world, the zonic Gods, and also the azonic,‡ who govern the parts of the world, wise itinerants, stationed about the illustrious pilots [of the universe,] and which the angelic series pours forth. Thee too, the renowned genus of heroes celebrates, which by occult paths pervades the works of mortals, and likewise the soul which does not incline to the regions of mortality, and the soul which descends into dark terrestrial masses."

† What these are will be shortly explained, when we come to speak of the Apostle Paul.

‡ Synesius does not here speak conformably to the Chaldean theologists, from whom he has derived these appellations. For the ζωναιοι and the αξωνοι, are according to them Gods, the former being the divinities of the stars, and the latter forming that order of Gods which is called by Proclus in the sixth book of this work απολυτος, *liberated*. Both these orders therefore, are superior to the angelic series. This unscientific manner however of calling both the highest and lowest divine powers hy the common name of angels, is not peculiar to Synesius and the Jews, but to all the fathers of the church, and all the Christian divines that succeeded them.

In another part also of the same hymn, he informs us that he adored the powers that preside over Thrace and Chalcedon.

Ικετευσα θεους,
δρηστηρας οσοι
γονιμον Θρηκης
κατεχουσι πεδον,
οι τ' αντιπεραν
χαλκηδονιας
εφεπουσι γνιας.

i.e. "I have supplicated the ministrant Gods that possess the Thracian soil, and also that, in an opposite direction, govern the Chalcedonian land."

And in the last place he says (in Hymn I.)

Νοος αφθιτος, τοκηων
Θεοκοιρανων απορρωξ,
ολιγα μεν, αλλ' εκεινων
ολος ουτος, εις τε παντη
ολος εις ολον δεδυκως,
κοτος ουρανων ελισσει·
το δ' ολον τουτο φυλασσων,
νενεμημεναισι μορφαι,
μεμερισμενος παρεστη·
ο μεν, αστερων διφρειαις,
ο δ' ες αννελων χορειας
ο δε και ρεποντι δεσμω,
χθονιαν ευρετο μορφαν.

The substance of which is, "that incorruptible intellect which is wholly an emanation of divinity, is totally diffused through the whole world, convolves the heavens, and preserves the universe with which it is present distributed in various forms. That one part of this intellect is distributed among the stars, and becomes, as it were, their charioteer; but another part among the angelic choirs; and another part is bound in a terrestrial form."

I confess I am wholly at a loss to conceive what could induce the moderns to controvert the dogma, that the stars and the whole world are animated, as it is an opinion of infinite antiquity, and is friendly to the most unperverted, spontaneous, and accurate conceptions of the human mind. Indeed, the rejection of it appears to me to be just as absurd as it would be in a maggot, if it were capable of syllogizing, to

infer that man is a machine impelled by some external force when he walks, because it never saw any animated reptile so large.

The sagacious Kepler, for so he is called even by the most modern writers,† appears to have had a conception of this great truth; but as he was more an astronomer than a philosopher, he saw this truth only partially, and he rather embraced it as subservient to his own astronomical opinions, than as forming an essential part of the true theory of the universe. But from what I have seen of the writings of Kepler, I have no doubt, if he had lived in the time of the Greeks, or if he had made the study of the works of Plato and Aristotle the business of his life, he would have become an adept in, and an illustrious and zealous champion of their philosophy. Kepler then (in *Harmonices Mundi*, lib. 4 p. 158) says, "That he does not oppose the dogma, that there is a soul of the universe, though he shall say nothing about it in that book. He adds, that if there is such a soul, it must reside in the centre of the world, which, according to him, is the sun, and from thence by the communication of the rays of light, which are in the place of spirits in an animated body, is propagated into all the amplitude of the world."‡ In the following passages also he confidently asserts that the earth has a soul. For he says "That the globe of the earth is a body such as is that of some animal; and that what its own soul is to an animal, that the sublunary nature which he investigates will be to the

† Dr Gregory, in the 70th proposition of the first book of his *Elements of Astronomy*, says of Kepler, "That his archetypal ratios, geometrical concinnities, and harmonic proportions, show such a force of genius as is not to be found in any of the writers of physical astronomy before him. So that Jeremiah Horrox, a very competent judge of these matters, though a little averse to Kepler, in the beginning of his astronomical studies, after having in vain tried others, entirely falling in with Kepler's doctrine and physical reasons, thus addresses his reader: *Kepler is a person whom I may justly admire above all mortals beside: I may call him great, divine, or even something more; since Kepler is to be valued above the whole tribe of philosophers. Him alone let the bards sing of. - Him alone let the philosophers read; being satisfied of this, that he who has Kepler has all things.*"

I quote this passage, not from the justness of the encomium it contains; for it is extravagant, and by no means true; but that the reader may see what an exalted opinion some of the greatest of the moderns have had of the genius of Kepler.

‡ "Et primum quidem de anima totius universi etsi non repuguo, mihi tamen hoc libro IV dicam. Videtur enim (si est talis aliqua) in centro mundi, quod nihi sol est, residere, indeque in omnem ejus amplitudinem commercio radioram lucis, qui sint loco spirituum in corpore animali propagari."

earth."† He adds, "That he sees for the most part every thing which proceeding from the body of an animal testifies that there is a soul in it, proceeds also from the body of the earth. For as the animated body produces in the superficies of the skin hairs, thus also the earth produces [on its surface] plants and trees; and as in the former lice are generated, so in the latter the worms called erucæ, grasshoppers, and various insects and marine monsters are produced. As the animated body likewise produces tears, mucus, and the recrement of the ears, and sometimes gum from the pustules of the face, thus also the earth produces amber and bitumen. As the bladder too produces urine, thus likewise mountains pour forth rivers. And as the body produces excrement of a sulphureous odour, and crepitus which may also be inflamed, so the earth produces sulphur, subterranean fires, thunder, and lightning. And as in the veins of an animal blood is generated, and together with it sweat which is ejected out of the body, so in the veins of the earth, metals, and fossils, and a rainy vapour are generated."‡ And in cap. 7 p. 102, after having shown that there is in the earth the sense of touching, that it respires, and is subject in certain parts to languors, and internal vicissitudes of the viscera, and that subterranean heat proceeds from the soul of the earth, he adds, "That a certain image of the zodiac is resplendent in this soul, and therefore of the whole firmament, and is the bond of the sympathy of things celestial and terrestrial.§

Bishop Berkeley also was by no means hostile to this opinion, that the world is one great animal, as is evident from the following extract from his Siris, (p.131).

"Blind fate and blind chance are at bottom much the same thing, and one no more intelligible than the other. Such is the mutual relation,

† "Denique terræ globus tale corpus erit, quale est alicujus animalis: quodque animali est sua anima, hoc erit telluri hæc, quam quærimus, natura sublunaris."

‡ "Videbam pleraque omnia, quæ ex corpore animantis provenientia, testantur animam in illo inesse, provenire etiam ex telluris corpore. Ut enim corpus in cutis superficie pilos, sic terra plantas arboresque profert; inque iis ibi pediculi, hic erucæ, cicadæ, variaque insecta et monstra marina nascuntur; et ut corpus lachrymas, blennam, auriumque recrementa, est ubi et gummi et faciei pustulis, sic tellus electrum, bitumen: utque vesica urinam, sic montes flumina fundunt; et ut corpus excrementum sulphurei odoris, crepitusque, qui etiam inflammari possunt, sic terra sulphur, ignes subterraneos, tonitrua, fulgura: utque in venis animantis generatur sanguis, et eum eo sudor, extra corpus ejectus; sic in venis terræ, metalia et fossilia, vaporque pluvius."

§ "Relucet igitur in anima telluris imago quædam circuli zodiaci sensibilis, totinsque adce firmamenti, vinculum sympathiæ rerum cœlestium et terrestrium."

connection, motion, and sympathy. The parts of this world, that they seem, as it were, animated and held together by one soul: and such is their harmony, order, and regular course, as shows the soul to be governed and directed by a mind. It was an opinion of remote antiquity that the world was an animal. If we may trust the Hermaic writings, the Ægyptians thought all things did partake of life. This opinion was also so general and current among the Greeks, that Plutarch asserts all others held the world to be an animal, and governed by providence, except Leucippus, Democritus, and Epicurus. And although an animal containing all bodies within itself, could not be touched or sensibly affected from without; yet it is plain they attributed to it an inward sense and feeling, as well as appetites and aversions; and that from all the various tones, actions, and passions of the universe, they supposed one symphony, one animal act and life to result.

"Iamblichus declares the world to be one animal, in which the parts, however distant each from other, are nevertheless related and connected by one common nature. And he teaches, what is also a received notion of the Pythagoreans and Platonics, that there is no chasm in nature, but a chain or scale of beings rising by gentle uninterrupted gradations from the lowest to the highest, each nature being informed and perfected by the participation of a higher. As air becomes igneous, so the purest fire becomes animal, and the animal soul becomes intellectual, which is to be understood, not of the change of one nature into another, but of the connection of different natures, each lower nature being, according to those philosophers, as it were, a receptacle or subject for the next above it to reside and act in.

"It is also the doctrine of Platonic philosophers, that intellect is the very life of living things, the first principle and exemplar of all, from whence, by different degrees, are derived the inferior classes of life; first the rational, then the sensitive, after that the vegetable, but so as in the rational animal there is still somewhat intellectual, again in the sensitive there is somewhat rational, and in the vegetable somewhat sensitive, and lastly in mixed bodies, as metals and minerals, somewhat of vegetation. By which means the whole is thought to be more perfectly connected. Which doctrine implies that all the faculties, instincts, and motions of inferior beings, in their several respective subordinations, are derived from, and depend upon intellect.

"Both Stoics and Platonics held the world to be alive, though sometimes it be mentioned as a sentient animal, sometimes as a plant or vegetable. *But in this, notwithstanding what has been surmised by some learned men, there seems to be no atheism. For so long as the world is*

supposed to be quickened by elementary fire or spirit, which is itself animated by soul, and directed by understanding, it follows that all parts thereof originally depend upon, and may be reduced unto, the same indivisible stem or principle, to wit, a supreme mind; which is the concurrent doctrine of Pythagoreans, Platonics, and Stoics."

Compare now the Newtonian with this theory, that the heavenly bodies are vitalized by their informing souls, that their orderly motion is the result of this vitality, and that the planets move harmonically round the sun, not as if urged by a centripetal force, but from an animated tendency to the principle and fountain of their light, and from a desire of partaking as largely as possible of his influence and power. In the former theory all the celestial motions are the effect of violence, in the latter they are all natural. The former is attended with insuperable difficulties, the latter, when the principle on which it is founded is admitted, with none. And the former is unscientific and merely hypothetical; but the latter is the progeny of the most accurate science, and is founded on the most genuine and unperverted conceptions of the human mind.

I have said that I should prove from the testimony of the Apostle Paul, that the Jews were not consistent in confounding *angels* properly so called with Gods. And this appears to me to be evident in the first place from the following passage in Hebrews ii v. 9 *πιστει νοομεν κατηρτισθαι τους αιωνας ρηματι θεου, εις το μη εκ φαινομενων τα βλεπομενα γενονεναι.* This in the English version is erroneously rendered; "Through faith we understand, that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear." I say this is erroneously translated, because in the first place *the worlds* is evidently a forced interpretation of *αιωνας*; and even admitting it is not, leaves the passage very ambiguous, from the uncertainty to what worlds Paul alludes. If we adopt *ages*, which is the general sense of the word in the New Testament, we shall indeed avoid a forced and ambiguous interpretation, but we shall render the meaning of the Apostle trifling in the extreme. For as he has elsewhere said, "that all things were framed by the word of God," what particular faith does it require to believe, that by the same word he framed the ages?

In the second place, from the definition of faith, given in the first verse of this chapter, that it is "the evidence of *things not seen,*" it is clear, that Paul is speaking in this passage of something *invisible*. Since then *αιωνας*; is neither *worlds* nor *ages*, what shall we say it is? I answer, the *æones* of the Valentinians. And agreeably to this, the whole passage should be translated as follows: "By faith we understand, that the *æones*

were framed by the word of God, in order that things which are seen, might be generated from such as do not appear (*i.e.* from things *invisible*)." Every one who is much conversant with greek authors, must certainly be convinced that εις το means *in order that;* and Bishop Pearson translates as I have done the latter part of this verse.

Now we learn from the second book of Irenæus against the heretics, that according to the Valentinians, all created things are the images of the *æones*, resident in the *pleroma*, or *fullness* of deity. And does it not clearly follow from the above version, that according to Paul too, the æones are the exemplars of visible or created things? To which we may add, that this sense of the passage clearly accords with the assertion that "faith is the evidence of things not seen." For here the things which do not appear are the *æones*; these, according to the Valentinians, subsisting in deity. So that from our version, Paul might say with great propriety, that "we understand by faith, that the *æones* were framed by the word of God, in order that things which are seen, might be generated from such as do not appear," for this naturally follows from his definition of faith.

I farther add, that among these *æones* of the Valentinians were *νους, βυθος, σιγη, αληθεια, σοφια i.e. intellect, a profundity, silence, truth, and wisdom*, which as Gale well observes in his notes on Iamblichus de Mysteriis etc. prove their dogmas to be of Chaldaic origin. For these words perpetually occur in the fragments of the Chaldaic oracles. And the middle of the Chaldean intelligible triad is denominated *αιων æon,*[†] *i.e. eternity*, and is also perfectly conformable to the theology of Plato, as is very satisfactorily shown by Proclus in the third book of the following work. According to the Chaldeans therefore, the æones are Gods; and considered as the exemplars of the visible universe, they are analogous to the ideas of Plato, which also are Gods, as is evident from

[†] Proclus begins the sixth book of the following work with observing that he has celebrated in the preceding book the hebdomadic *æon* of the intellectual Gods. The *æones* therefore, though the cause of them exists in the intelligible, properly belong to the intellectual order; and the Demiurgus or artificer of the universe subsists at the extremity of that order. But the demiurgus according to Orpheus, prior to the fabrication of the world absorbed in himself Phanes the exemplar of the universe. Hence he became full of ideas of which the forms in the sensible universe are the images. And as all intellectual natures are in each, it is evident that *things which are seen were generated from the invisible æones*, conformably to the assertion of Paul.

the *Parmenides* of that philosopher.† According to Paul too, as the *æones* are the fabricators of the visible world, they must be beings of a much higher order than angels, and consequently must be Gods; productive power being one of the great characteristics of a divine nature.

Again, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, chap. i v. 21. Paul says that God has exalted Christ "far above every principality, and power, and might, and dominion," υπερανω παση̃ς αρχη̃ς και εξουσιας, και δυναμεως και κυριοτητος. And in the 6th chapter and 12th verse he conjoins with principalities and powers, *the rulers of the world, i.e.* the seven planets, προς τας αρχας, προς τας εξουσιας, προς τασ κοσμοκρατορας. Augustin‡ confesses that he is ignorant what the difference is between those four words, (principality, power, might and dominion,) in which the Apostle Paul seems to comprehend all the celestial society. "Quid inter se distent quatuor illa vocabula quibus universam ipsam cœlestem societatem videtur Apostolus esse complexus, dicant qui possunt, si tamen possunt probare quod dicunt; ego me ista ignorare fateos." Ignatius also (in Epist. ad Trallianos) speaks of the angelic orders, the diversities of archangels and armies, the differences of the orders characterised by might and dominion, of thrones and powers, *the magnificence of the æones,*§ and the transcendency of Cherubim and Seraphim," και γαρ εγω ου καθ' ο, τι δεδεμαι, και δυναμαι νοειν τα επουρανια, και τας αγγελικας ταξεις, και τας των αρχαγγελων και στρατιων εξαλλαγας, δυναμεων τε και κυριοτητων διαφορας, θρονων τε και εξουσιων παραλλαγας, αιωνων δε μεγαλοτητας, των τε χερουβιμ και σεραφιμ τας υπεροχας.

The opinion of Grotius* therefore, is highly probable, that the Jews obtained the names of Powers, Dominations, and Principalities, from their Babylonic captivity; and Gale in his notes on Iamblichus° says, that certain passages of Zoroaster and Ostanes cited by the author of

† I refer the reader who is desirous of being fully convinced of this to the notes accompanying my translation of that dialogue, in vol. 3 of my Plato [TTS vol. XL]

‡ Ad Laurentium, c. 58.

§ Here we see the *æones* are acknowledged by Irenæus to be beings of an order superior to angels.

* Ad Cap. 18. Mattheæi.

° De Myst. p. 204.

Arithm. Theolog. confirm this opinion of Grotius. Indeed, the appellation of *αρχαι principles*, which are the first of the four powers mentioned by Paul, was given by the Chaldeans to that order of Gods called by the Grecian theologists *supermundane* and *assimilative*, the nature of which is unfolded by Proclus in the sixth book of the following work; and Proclus in the fourth book of his MS. Commentary on the *Parmenides* of Plato shows that the order of Gods denominated *νοητος και νοερος, intelligible and at the same time intellectual,* is according to the Chaldean oracles† principally characterised by *domination.* In proof of this, the two following oracles are cited by him, the first, concerning the empyrean, and the second concerning the material Synoches.‡

> Τοις δε πυρος νοερου νοεροις πρηστηρσιν απαντα
> Εικαθε δουλευοντα, πατρος πειθηνιδι βουλη.

i.e. "All things yield ministrant to the intellectual presters of intellectual fire, through the persuasive will of the father." And

> αλλα και υλαιοις οσα δουλευει Συνοχευσι.

i.e. "But likewise such as are in subjection to the material Synoches."

Farther still, Paul in the Epistle to the Romans, chap. viii v. 38, says "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor *angels,* nor *principalities,* nor *powers,* nor things present, nor things to come, nor *height*, nor *depth,* nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, etc." From this arrangement therefore, it is evident that principalities and powers are not the same with angels; and as according to Paul they are beings so exalted, that in his Epistle to the Ephesians, he could not find any thing more magnificent to say of Christ, than that he is raised even above them, it follows that they must be Gods, since they are superior to the angelic order. It is remarkable too, that he co-arranges *height* and *depth* (*υψωμα και βαθος*) with principalities and powers; and *βυθος* is one of the *æones* according to the Valentinians.

In the first Epistle to the Corinthians likewise, chap. viii. v. 5. Paul expressly asserts that there is a divine multitude. For he says, "Though there be that are called Gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there

† See my Collection of these Oracles [TTS vol. VII.]

‡ The Synoches form the second triad of the intelligible, and at the same time intellectual order of Gods.

be Gods many and Lords many;)" in the parenthesis of which verse, it is incontrovertibly evident that he admits the existence of a plurality of Gods, though as well as the heathens he believed that one God only was supreme and the father of *all* things. Nor am I singular in asserting that this was admitted by Paul. For the Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite in the second chapter of his treatise On the Divine Names observes concerning what is here said by Paul as follows: "Again, from the deific energy of God, by which every thing according to its ability becomes deiform, many Gods are generated; in consequence of which there appears and is said to be a separation and multiplication of the one [supreme] God. Nevertheless, God himself, who is the chief deity, and is superessentially the supreme, is still one God, remaining impartible in the Gods distributed from him, united to himself, unmingled with the many, and void of multitude." And he afterwards adds, "that this was in a transcendent manner understood by Paul, who was the leader both of him, and his preceptor, to divine illumination," in the above cited verse. And, "that in divine natures, unions vanquish and precede separations, and yet nevertheless they are united, after the separation which does not in proceeding depart from *The One*, and is unical."† Paul therefore, according to this Dionysius, considered the Gods, conformably to Plato and the best of his disciples, as deiform processions from *The One*, and which at the same time that they have a distinct subsistence from, are profoundly united to their great producing cause. Dionysius also employs the very same expression which Proclus continually uses when speaking of the separation of the Gods from their source; for he says that the divine multitude *ανεκφοιτητος του ενος*, *i.e.* does not depart from, but abides in *The One*. Hence Proclus in the fifth book of his MS Commentary On the *Parmenides* of Plato, speaking of the divine unities says, "Whichever among these you assume, it is the same with the others, because all of them are in each other, and are rooted in *The One*. For as trees by their summits (*i.e.* their roots) are fixed in the earth, and through these are

† *Παλιν τη εξ αυτου θεωσει, τω κατα δυναμιν εκαστου θεοειδει θεων πολλων γιγνομενων, δοκει μεν ειναι και λεγεται του ενος θεου διακρισις και πολλαπλασιασμος· εστι δε ουδεν ηττον ο αρχιθεος και υπερθεος υπερουσιως, εις θεος, αμεριστος εν τοις μεριστοις, ηνωμενος, εαυτω, και τοις πολλοις αμιγης και απληθυντος. Και ταυτο υπερφυως εννοησας ο κοινος ημων και του καθηγεμονος επι την θειαν φωτοδοσιαν χειραγωγος, ο πολυς τα θεια, το φως του κοσμου, τα δε φησιν ενθεαστικως εν τοις ιεροις αυτου γραμμασι. Και γαρ ειπερ εισι λεγομενοι θεοι, ειτε εν ουρανω, ειτε επι γης, κ.λ. - Και γαρ επι των θειων αι ενωσεις των διακρισιων επικρατουσι και προκαταρχουσι, και ουδεν ηττον εστιν ηνωμενα, και μετα την του ενος ανικφοιτητσν και ενιαιαν διακρισιν.*

earthly, after the same manner also divine natures are rooted by their summits in *The One*, and each of them is a unity and one, through unconfused union with *The One Itself."* Ην γαρ αν τουτων λαβης, την αυτην ταις αλλαις λαμβανεις, διοτι δη πασαι και εν αλληλαις εισι, και ενερριζονται τῳ ενι. Καθαπερ γαρ τα δενδρα ταις εαυτων κορυθαις ενιδρυνται τη γη, και εστι γηινα κατ' εκεινας, τον αυτον τροπον και τα θεια ταις εαυτων ακροτησιν ενερριζωται τῳ ενι, και εκαστον αυτων ενας εστι, και εν, δια την προς το εν ασυγχυτον ενωσιν.

This Dionysius, who certainly lived posterior to Proclus, because he continually borrows from his works, barbarously confounding that scientific arrangement of these deiform processions from *The One*, which is so admirably unfolded by Proclus in the following work, classes them as follows. The first order, according to him, consists of Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones. The second of the divine essences characterized by dominion, might, and power. And the third of Principalities, Archangels, and Angels. Hence he has transferred the characteristics of the intelligible triad of Gods to Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones. For symmetry, truth, and beauty, which characterize this triad, are said by Plato in the *Philebus* to subsist *in the vestibule of The Good;* (επι μεν τοις του αγαθου νυν ηδη προθυροις εφεσταναι) and Dionysius says† of his first order that *"it is as it were arranged in the vestibules of deity."* Goodness, wisdom, and beauty also, are shown by Proclus in the third book of the following work to belong to the intelligible triad; *goodness* to its summit, *wisdom* to the middle of it, and *beauty* to its extremity. And Dionysius says, that according to the Hebrews, the word Cherubim signifies *a multitude of knowledge, or an effusion of wisdom,* την δε χερουβιμ εμφαυνειν, πληθος γνωσεως, η χυσιν σοφιας. The characteristics of the Gods called νοητοι και νοεροι *intelligible and at the same time intellectual,* and of the Gods that are νοερος *intellectual* alone, he appears to have transferred to his middle triad which is characterized by *dominion, might, and power.* And he has adapted his third triad consisting of *Principalities, Archangels,* and *Angels* to the *supermundane, liberated,* and *mundane* orders of Gods. For the supermundane Gods are called by Proclus in the sixth book of the following work αρχαι *Principalities,* or *rulers,* which is the word employed by Dionysius and Paul. And the mundane Gods are said by Proclus (in Parmenid.) to be

† Ταις πρωταις ουσιαις, αι μετα την ουσιοποιον αυτων θεαρχιων ιδρυμεναι, και οιον εν προθυροις αυτης τιταγμεναι, πασης εισιν αορατου και ορατης υπερβεβηκυιαι γεγονυιας δυναμεως, ως οικειον οιητεον ειναι, και κατα παν ομοειδη την ιεραρχιαν. De Cœlest. Hierarch. cap. 7.

the sources of a *winged* life, and angels are celebrated by Dionysius as having *wings*. Hence it is evident that Dionysius has accommodated the peculiarities of the different orders of Gods to the nine orders which he denominates *celestial powers;* and his arrangement has been adopted by all succeeding Christian theologists.

Vestiges therefore of the theology of Plato may be seen both in the Jewish and Christian religion; and in a similar manner, a resemblance in the religions of all other nations to it might be easily pointed out, and its universality be clearly demonstrated. Omitting however, a discussion of this kind for the present, I shall farther observe respecting this theology, that the deification of dead men, and the worshipping men as Gods form no part of it when it is considered according to its genuine purity. Numerous instances of the truth of this might be adduced, but I shall mention for this purpose, as unexceptionable witnesses, the writings of Plato, the Golden Pythagoric verses,† and the treatise of

† "Diogenes Laertius says of Pythagoras, *That he charged his disciples not to give equal degrees of honour to the Gods and heroes.* Herodotus (in Euterpe) says of the Greeks, *That they worshipped Hercules two ways, one as an immortal deity and so they sacrificed to him: and another as a Hero, and so they celebrated his memory.* Isocrates (Encom. Helen.) distinguishes between the honours of heroes and Gods, when he speaks of Menelaus and Helena. But the distinction is no where more fully expressed than in the Greek inscription upon the statue of Regilla, wife to Herodes Atticus, as Salmasius thinks, which was set up in his temple at Triopium, and taken from the statue itself by Sirmondus; where it is said, *That she had neither the honour of a mortal, nor yet that which was proper to the Gods:* ουδε ιερα θνητοις, αταρ ουδε θεοισιν ομοια. It seems by the inscription of Herodes, and by the testament of Epicteta extant in Greek in the *Collection of Inscriptions,* that it was in the power of particular families to keep festival days in honour of some of their own family, and to give *heroical honours* to them. In that noble inscription at Venice, we find three days appointed every year to be kept, and a *confraternity* established for that purpose with the laws of it. The first day to be observed in honour of the Muses and sacrifices to be offered to them as *deities.* The second and third days in honour of the *heroes* of the family; between which honour and that of deities, they shewed the difference by the distance of time between them, and the preference given to the other. But wherein soever the *difference* lay, that there was a *distinction* acknowledged among them appears by this passage of Valerius in his excellent oration extant in Dionysius Halicarnass. Antiq. Rom. lib. 11 p. 696. *I call,* says he, *the Gods to witness, whose temples and altars our family has worshipped with common sacrifices; and next after them, I call the Genii of our ancestors, to whom we give* δευτερας τιμας, *the second honours next to the Gods,* as Celsus calls those τας προσηκουσας τιμας *the due honours that belong to the lower dæmons.* From which we take notice, that the Heathens did not confound all *degrees of divine worship,* giving to the lowest object the same which they supposed to be due to the *celestial deities,* or the *supreme God.* So that if the distinction of divine worship will excuse from idolatry, the Heathens were not to blame for it." See Stillingfleet's answer to a book entitled *Catholics no Idolaters,* p. 510, 513, etc.

Plutarch On Isis and Osiris. All the works of Plato indeed, evince the truth of this position, but this is particularly manifest from his Laws. The Golden verses order, that the immortal Gods be honoured first as they are disposed by law; afterwards the illustrious Heroes, under which appellation, the author of the verses comprehends also angels and dæmons properly so called; and in the last place the terrestrial dæmons, *i.e.* such good men as transcend in virtue the rest of mankind. But to honour the Gods as they are disposed by law, is, as Hierocles observes, to reverence them as they are arranged by their fabricator and father; and this is to honour them as beings superior to man. Hence, to honour men, however excellent they may be, as Gods, is not to honour the Gods according to the rank in which they are placed by their Creator, for it is confounding the divine with the human nature, and is thus acting directly contrary to the Pythagoric precept. Plutarch too in his above-mentioned treatise most forcibly and clearly shows the impiety of worshipping men as Gods, as is evident from the following extract:

"Those therefore, who think that things of this kind [*i.e.* fabulous stories of the Gods as if they were men] are but so many commemorations of the actions and disasters of kings and tyrants, who through transcendency in virtue or power, inscribed the title of divinity on their renown, and afterwards fell into great calamities and misfortunes, these employ the most easy method indeed of eluding the story, and not badly transfer things of evil report, from the Gods to men; and they are assisted in so doing by the narrations themselves. For the Egyptians relate, that Hermes was as to his body, with one arm longer than the other; that Typhon was in his complexion red; but Orus white, and Osiris black, as if they had been by nature men. Farther still, they also call Osiris a commander, and Canopus a pilot, from whom they say the star of that name was denominated. The ship likewise, which the Greeks call Argo, being the image of the ark of Osiris, and which therefore in honour of it is become a constellation, they make to ride not far from Orion and the Dog; of which they consider the one as sacred to Orus, but the other to Isis.

"I fear, however, that this [according to the proverb] would be to move things immoveable, and to declare war, not only as Simonides says, against a great length of time, but also against many nations and families of mankind who are under the influence of divine inspiration through piety to these Gods; and would not in any respect fall short of transferring from heaven to earth, such great and venerable names, and of thereby shaking and dissolving that worship and belief, which has

been implanted in almost all men from their very birth, would be opening great doors to the tribe of atheists, who convert divine into human concerns; and would likewise afford a large license to the impostures of Euemerus of Messina, who devised certain memoirs of an incredible and fictitious mythology,† and *thereby spread every kind of atheism through the globe, by inscribing all the received Gods, without any discrimination, by the names of generals, naval-captains, and kings, who lived in remote periods of time.* He further adds, that they are recorded in golden characters, in a certain country called Panchoa, at which neither any Barbarian or Grecian ever arrived, except Euemerus alone, who, as it seems, sailed to the Panchoans and Triphyllians, that neither have, nor ever had a being. And though the great actions of Semiramis are celebrated by the Assyrians, and those of Sesostris in Egypt; and though the Phrygians even to the present time, call all splendid and admirable actions Manic, because a certain person named Mania who was one of their ancient kings, whom some call Musdes, was a brave and powerful man; and farther still, though Cyrus among the Persians, and Alexander among the Macedonians, proceeded in their victories, almost as far as to the boundaries of the earth, yet they only retain the names of good kings, and are remembered as such, [and not as Gods.]

"But if certain persons, inflated by ostentation, as Plato says, having their soul at one and the same time inflamed with youth and ignorance, have insolently assumed the appellation of Gods, and had temples erected in their honour, yet this opinion of them flourished but for a short time, and afterwards they were charged with vanity and arrogance, in conjunction with impiety and lawless conduct; and thus,

Like smoke they flew away with swift-pac'd fate.

And being dragged from temples and altars like fugitive slaves, they have now nothing left them, but their monuments and tombs. Hence Antigonus the elder said to one Hermodotus, who had celebrated him in his poems as the offspring of the sun and a God, 'he who empties my close-stool-pan knows no such thing of me.' Very properly also, did Lysippus the sculptor blame Apelles the painter, for drawing the picture of Alexander with a thunder-bolt in his hand, whereas he had

† Both Arnobius therefore and Minoclus Felix were very unfortunate in quoting this impostor to prove that the Gods of the ancients had formerly been men. Vid. Arnob. lib. 4. Adversus Gentes, et Minueii Felicia Octavo, p. 350, Parisiis, 1605.

represented him with a spear, the glory of which, as being true and proper, no time would take away."

In another part of the same work also, he admirably reprobates the impiety of making the Gods to be things inanimate, which was very common with Latin writers of the Augustan age, and of the ages that accompanied the decline and fall of the Roman empire. But what he says on this subject is as follows:

"In the second place, which is of still greater consequence, men should be careful, and very much afraid, lest before they are aware, they tear in pieces and dissolve divine natures, into blasts of wind, streams of water, seminations, earings of land, accidents of the earth, and mutations of the seasons, as those do who make Bacchus to be wine, and Vulcan flame. Cleanthes also somewhere says, that Persephone or Proserpine is the spirit or air that *passes through* (*φερομενον*) the fruits of the earth, and is then *slain*, (*φονευομενον*). And a certain poet says of reapers,

Then when the youth the limbs of Ceres cut.

For these men do not in any respect differ from those who conceive the sails, the cables, and the anchor of a ship, to be the pilot, the yarn and the web to be the weaver, and the bowl, or the mead, or the ptisan, to be the physician. But they also produce dire and atheistical opinions, by giving the names of Gods to natures and things deprived of sense and soul, and that are necessarily destroyed by men, who are in want of and use them. For it is not possible to conceive that these things are Gods; since, neither can any thing be a God to men, which is deprived of soul, or is subject to human power. From these things however, we are led to conceive those beings to be Gods, who both use them and impart them to us, and supply them perpetually and without ceasing. Nor do we conceive that the Gods who bestow these, are different in different countries, nor that some of them are peculiar to the Barbarians, but others to the Grecians, nor that some are southern, and others northern; but as the sun and moon, the heavens, the land, and the sea, are common to all men, yet are differently denominated by different nations; so the one reason that adorns these things, and the one providence that administers them, and the ministrant powers that preside over all nations, have different appellations and honours assigned them according to law by different countries. Of those also that have been consecrated to their service, some employ obscure, but others clearer symbols, not without danger thus conducting our intellectual conceptions to the apprehension of divine natures. For some, deviating from the true meaning of these symbols, have entirely slipt into superstition; and others again flying from superstition as a quagmire,

have unaware fallen upon atheism as on a precipice. Hence, in order to avoid these dangers, it is especially necessary that resuming the reasoning of Philosophy as our guide to mystic knowledge, we should conceive piously of every thing that is said or done in religion; lest that, as Theodorus said, while he extended his arguments with his right hand, some of his auditors received them with their left, so we should fall into dangerous errors, by receiving what the laws have well instituted about sacrifices and festivals in a manner different from their original intention."

The Emperor Julian, as well as Plutarch appears to have been perfectly aware of this confusion in the religion of the Heathens arising from the deification of men, and in the fragments of his treatise against the Christians, preserved by Cyril, he speaks of it as follows: "If any one wishes to consider the truth respecting you [Christians,] he will find that your impiety is composed of the Judaic audacity, and *the indolence and confusion of the Heathens.* For deriving from both, not that which is most beautiful, but the worst, you have fabricated a web of evils. With the Hebrews indeed, there are accurate and venerable laws pertaining to religion, and innumerable precepts which require a most holy life and deliberate choice. But when the Jewish legislator forbids the serving all the Gods, and enjoins the worship of one alone, whose portion is Jacob, and Israel the line of his inheritance, and not only says this, but also omits to add, I think, you shall not revile the Gods, the detestable wickedness and audacity of those in after times, wishing to take away all religious reverence from the multitude, thought that not to worship should be followed by blaspheming the Gods. This you have alone thence derived; but there is no similitude in any thing else between you and them. Hence, from the innovation of the Hebrews, you have seized blasphemy towards the venerable Gods; *but from our religion you have cast aside reverence to every nature more excellent than man, and the love of paternal institutes.*"

"So great an apprehension indeed, says Dr. Stillingfleet,† had the Heathens of the necessity of *appropriate acts of divine worship,* that some of them have chosen to die, rather than to give them to what they did not believe to be God. We have a remarkable story to this purpose in Arrian and Curtius‡ concerning Callisthenes. Alexander arriving at that degree of vanity, as to desire to have divine worship given him, and the matter being started out of design among the courtiers, either by

† Answer to *Catholics no Idolators*, Lond. 1676 p. 211.

‡ Arrian. de Exped. Alex. 1. 4. et Curt. lib. 8.

Anaxarchus, as Arrian, or Cleo the Sicilian, as Curtius says; and the way of doing it proposed, *viz.* by incense and prostration; Callisthenes vehemently opposed it, *as that which would confound the difference of human and divine worship, which had been preserved inviolable among them.* The worship of the Gods had been kept up in temples, with altars, and images, and sacrifices, and hymns, and prostrations, and such like; *but it is by no means fitting,* says he, *for us to confound these things, either by lifting up men to the honours of the Gods, or depressing the Gods to the honours of men.* For neither would Alexander suffer any man to usurp his royal dignity by the votes of men; how much more justly may the Gods disdain for any man to take their honours to himself. And it appears by Plutarch,† that the Greeks thought it a mean and base thing for any of them, when sent on an embassy to the kings of Persia, to prostrate themselves before them, because this was only allowed among them in divine adoration. Therefore, says he, when Pelopidas and Ismenias were sent to Artaxerxes, Pelopidas did nothing unworthy, but Ismenias let fall his ring to the ground, and stooping for that was thought to make his adoration; which was altogether as good a shift as the Jesuits advising the crucifix to be held in the Mandarins' hands while they made their adorations in the Heathen temples in China.

"Conon‡ also *refused to make his adoration, as a disgrace to his city;* and Isocrates§ accuses the Persians for doing it, *because herein they shewed, that they despised the Gods rather than men, by prostituting their honours to their princes.* Herodotus mentions Sperchius and Bulis, who could not with the greatest violence be brought to give adoration to Xerxes, *because it was against the law of their country to give divine honour to men.** And Valerius Maximus° says, *the Athenians put Timagoras to death for doing it;* so strong an apprehension had possessed them, that the manner of worship which they used to their Gods, should be preserved sacred and inviolable." The philosopher Sallust also in his treatise On the Gods and the World says, "It is not unreasonable to suppose that impiety is a species of punishment, and that those who

† Vit. Artaxers. Ælian. Var. hist. lib. 1. c. 21.

‡ Justin. lib. 6.

§ Panegyr.

* Lib. 7.

° Lib. 6. Cap. 3.

have had a knowledge of the Gods, and yet despised them, will in another life be deprived of this knowledge. And it is requisite to make the punishment of those who have honoured their kings as Gods to consist in being expelled from the Gods."†

When the ineffable transcendency of the first God, which was considered as the grand principle in the Heathen theology, by its most ancient promulgators Orpheus, Pythagoras, and Plato, was forgotten, this oblivion was doubtless the principal cause of dead men being deified by the Pagans. Had they properly directed their attention to this transcendency they would have perceived it to be so immense as to surpass eternity, infinity, self-subsistence, and even essence itself, and that these in reality belong to those venerable natures which are as it were first unfolded into light from the unfathomable depths of that truly mystic unknown, about which all knowledge is refunded into ignorance. For as Simplicius justly observes, "It is requisite that he who ascends to the principle of things should investigate whether it is possible there can be any thing better than the supposed principle; and if something more excellent is found, the same enquiry should again be made respecting that, till we arrive at the highest conceptions, than which we have no longer any more venerable. Nor should we stop in our ascent till we find this to be the case. For there is no occasion to fear that our progression will be through an unsubstantial void, by conceiving something about the first principles which is greater and more transcendent than their nature. For it is not possible for our conceptions to take such a mighty leap as to equal, and much less to pass beyond the dignity of the first principles of things." He adds, "This therefore is one and the best extension [of the soul] to [the highest] God, and is as much as possible irreprehensible; *viz.* to know firmly, that by ascribing to him the most venerable excellencies we can conceive, and the most holy and primary names and things, we ascribe nothing to him which is suitable to his dignity. It is sufficient however, to procure our pardon [for the attempt,] that we can attribute to him nothing superior."‡ If it is not possible therefore to form any ideas equal to the

† Και κολασεως δε ειδος ειναι αθειαν ουκ απεικος. Τους γαρ γνοντας θεους, και καταφρονησαντας, ευλογον εν ετερῳ βιῳ και της γνεωσεως στερεσθαι, και τους εαυτων βασιλεας ως θεους τιμησαντας, εδει την δικην αυτων ποιησαι των θεων εκπισειν. Cap. 18 [TTS vol. IV.]

‡ Και χρη τον επι τας αρχας αναβαινοντα ζητειν, ει δυνατον ειναι τι κρειστον της υποτεθεισης αρχης κἀν ευρεθη, παλιν επ' εκεινου ζητειν, εως αν εις τας ακροτατας εννοιας ελθωμεν, ων ουκετι σεμνοτερας εχομεν· και μη στησαι την αναβασιν. Ουδε γαρ ευλαβητεον μη κενεμβατωμεν, μειζονα τινα και υπερβαινοντα τας πρωτας αρχας περι

dignity of the immediate progeny of the ineffable, *i.e.* of the first principles of things, how much less can our conceptions reach that thrice unknown darkness, in the reverential language of the Egyptians,† which is even beyond these? Had the Heathens therefore considered as they ought this transcendency of the supreme God, they would never have presumed to equalize the human with the divine nature, and consequently would never have worshipped men as Gods. Their theology, however, is not to be accused as the cause of this impiety, but their forgetfulness of the sublimest of its dogmas, and the confusion with which this oblivion was necessarily attended.

In the last place, I wish to adduce a few respectable testimonies to prove that statues were not considered nor worshipped by any of the intelligent Heathens as Gods, but as the resemblances of the Gods, as auxiliaries to the recollection of a divine nature, and the means of procuring its assistance and favour. For this purpose, I shall first present the reader with what the philosopher Sallust says concerning sacrifices and the honours which were paid to the divinities, in his golden treatise On the Gods and the World. "The honours, says he, which we pay to the Gods are performed for the sake of our advantage; and since the providence of the Gods is every where extended, a certain habitude or fitness is all that is requisite in order to receive their beneficent communications. But all habitude is produced through imitation and similitude. Hence temples imitate the heavens, but altars the earth; statues resemble life, and on this account they are similar to animals; prayers imitate that which is intellectual; but characters superior ineffable powers; herbs and stones resemble matter; and animals which are sacrificed the irrational life of our souls. But from all these nothing happens to the Gods beyond what they already possess; for what accession can be made to a divine nature? But a conjunction with our souls and the Gods is by these means produced.

αυτων εννοουντες. Ου γαρ δυνατον τηλικουτον πηδημα πηδησαι τας ημετερας εννοιας, ως παρισωθηναι τη αξια των πρωτων αρχων, ου λεγω και υπερπτηναι· μια γαρ αυτη προς θεον ανατασις αριστη, και ως δυνατον απταιστος. Και ων εννοουμεν αγαθων τα σεμνοτατα, και αγιωτατα, και πρωτουργα, και ονοματα, και πραγματα αυτω ανατιθεντας ειδεναι βεβαιως, οτι μηδεν ανατεθεικαμεν αξιον· αρκει δε ημιν εις συγγνωμην, το μηδεν εχειν εκεινων υπερτερον. Simplic. in Epict. Enchir. p. 207 Lond. 1670. 8vo.

† Of the first principle, says Damascius (in M.S. περι αρχον) the Egyptians said nothing, but celebrated it as a darkness beyond all intellectual conception, a thrice unknown darkness, πρωτην αρχην ανυμνηκασαν, σκοτος υπερ πασαν νοησιν, σκοτος αγνωστον, τρις τουτο επιφημιζοντες.

"I think however, it will be proper to add a few things concerning sacrifices. And in the first place, since we possess every thing from the Gods, and it is but just to offer the first fruits of gifts to the givers; hence, of our possessions we offer the first fruits through consecrated gifts; of our bodies through ornaments; and of our life through sacrifices. Besides, without sacrifices, prayers are words only; but accompanied with sacrifices they become animated words; the words indeed corroborating life, but life animating the words. Add too, that the felicity of every thing is its proper perfection; but the proper perfection of every thing consists in a conjunction with its cause. And on this account we pray that we may be conjoined with the Gods. Since therefore life primarily subsists in the Gods, and there is also a certain human life, but the latter desires to be united to the former, a medium is required; for natures much distant from each other cannot be conjoined without a medium. And it is necessary that the medium should be similar to the connected natures. Life therefore must necessarily be the medium of life; and hence men of the present day that are happy, and all the ancients, have sacrificed animals. And this indeed not rashly, but in a manner accommodated to every god, with many other ceremonies respecting the cultivation of divinity."†

In the next place, the elegant Maximus Tyrius admirably observes concerning the worship of statues‡ as follows: "It appears to me that as external discourse has no need, in order to its composition, of certain Phœnician, or Ionian, or Attic, or Assyrian, or Egyptian characters, but human imbecility devised these marks, in which inserting its dulness, it recovers from them its memory; in like manner a divine nature has no need of statues or altars; but human nature being very imbecile, and as much distant from divinity as earth from heaven, devised these symbols, in which it inserted the names and the renown of the Gods. Those, therefore, whose memory is robust, and who are able, by directly extending their soul to heaven, to meet with divinity, have, *perhaps*,§ no

† See chap. 15 and 16, of my translation of this excellent work. [TTS vol. IV, p. 19 *et seq.*]

‡ See my translation of his Dissertations, Dissertat. 38 [TTS vol. VI, p. 309 *et seq.*], the title of which is, *Whether statues should be dedicated to the Gods.*

§ The philosopher Isidorus was a man of this description, as we are informed by Damascius in the extracts from his life preserved by Photius. For he says of him: *ουτε τα αγαλματα προσκυνειν εθελων, αλλ' ηδη επ' αυτους τους θεους ιεμενος, εισω κρυπτομενους ουκ εν αδυτοις, αλλ' εν αυτῳ τῳ απορρητῳ, ο, τι ποτε εστι της παντελους αγνωσιας πως ουν επ' αυτους ιετο τοιουτους οντας; ερωτι δεινῳ απορρητῳ και τουτῳ*

need of statues. This race is, however, rare among men, and in a whole nation you will not find one who recollects divinity, and who is not in want of this kind of assistance, which resembles that devised by writing masters for boys, who give them obscure marks as copies; by writing over which, their hand being guided by that of the master, they become, through memory, accustomed to the art. It appears to me therefore, that legislators devised these statues for men, as if for a certain kind of boys, as tokens of the honour which should be paid to divinity, and a certain manuduction as it were and path to reminiscence.

"Of statues however, there is neither one law, nor one mode, nor one art, nor one matter. For the Greeks think it fit to honour the Gods from things the most beautiful in the earth, from a pure matter, the human form, and accurate art: and their opinion is not irrational who fashion statues in the human resemblance. For if the human soul is most near and most similar to divinity, it is not reasonable to suppose that divinity would invest that which is most similar to himself with a most deformed body, but rather with one which would be an easy vehicle to immortal souls, light, and adapted to motion. For this alone, of all the bodies on the earth, raises its summit on high, is magnificent, superb, and full of symmetry, neither astonishing through its magnitude, nor terrible through its strength, nor moved with difficulty through its weight, nor slippery through its smoothness, nor repercussive through its hardness, nor groveling through its coldness, nor precipitate through its heat, nor inclined to swim through its laxity, nor feeding on raw flesh through its ferocity, nor on grass through its imbecility; but is harmonically composed for its proper works, and is dreadful to timid animals, but mild to such as are brave. It is also adapted to walk by nature, but winged by reason, capable of swimming by art, feeds on corn and fruits, and cultivates the earth, is of a good colour, stands firm, has a pleasing countenance, and a graceful beard. In the resemblance of such a body, the Greeks think fit to honour the Gods."

He then observes, "that with respect to the Barbarians, all of them in like manner admit the subsistence of divinity, but different nations among these adopt different symbols." After which he adds, "O many

και τις δε αλλος η αγνωστος και ο ερως; κια τινα τουτο φαμεν, ισασιν οι πειραθεντες· ειπειν δε αδυνατον, και νοησαι γε ουδεν μαλλον ραδιον. i.e. "He was not willing to adore statues, but approached to the Gods themselves, who are inwardly concealed not in adyta, but in the occult itself, whatever it may be of all-perfect ignorance. How therefore to them being such did he approach? Through vehement love, this also being occult. And what else indeed, could conduct him to them than a love which is also unknown? What my meaning is those who have experienced this love know; but it is impossible to reveal it by words, and it is no less difficult to understand what it is."

and all-various statues! of which some are fashioned by art, and others are embraced through indigence: some are honoured through utility, and others are venerated through the astonishment which they excite; some are considered as divine through their magnitude, and others are celebrated for their beauty! There is not indeed any race of men, neither Barbarian nor Grecian, neither maritime nor continental, neither living a pastoral life, nor dwelling in cities, which can endure to be without some symbols of the honour of the Gods. How, therefore, shall any one discuss the question whether it is proper that statues of the Gods should be fabricated or not. For if we were to give laws to other men recently sprung from the earth, and dwelling beyond our boundaries and our air, or who were fashioned by a certain Prometheus, ignorant of life, and law, and reason, it might perhaps demand consideration, whether this race should be permitted to adore these spontaneous statues alone, which are not fashioned from ivory or gold, and which are neither oaks nor cedars, nor rivers, nor birds, but the rising sun, the splendid moon, the variegated heaven, the earth itself and the air, all fire and all water; or shall we constrain these men also to the necessity of honouring wood, or stones or images? If, however, this is the common law of all men, let us make no innovations, let us admit the conceptions concerning the Gods, and preserve their symbols as well as their names.

"For divinity indeed, the father and fabricator of all things, is more ancient than the sun and the heavens, more excellent than time and eternity, and every flowing nature, and is a legislator without law, ineffable by voice, and invisible by the eyes. Not being able, however, to comprehend his essence, we apply for assistance to words and names, to animals, and figures of gold and ivory and silver, to plants and rivers, to the summits of mountains, and to streams of water; desiring indeed to understand his nature, but through imbecility calling him by the names of such things as appear to us to be beautiful. And in thus acting, we are affected in the same manner as lovers, who are delighted with surveying the images of the objects of their love, and with recollecting the lyre, the dart, and the seat of these, the circus in which they ran, and every thing in short, which excites the memory of the beloved object. What then remains for me to investigate and determine respecting statues? only to admit the subsistence of deity. But if the art of Phidias excites the Greeks to the recollection of divinity, honour to animals the Egyptians, a river others, and fire others, I do not condemn the dissonance: let them only know, let them only love, let them only be mindful of the object they adore."

With respect to the worship of animals, Plutarch apologizes for it in the following excellent manner in his treatise On Isis and Osiris.

"It now remains that we should speak of the utility of these animals to man, and of their symbolical meaning; some of them partaking of one of these only, but many of them of both. It is evident therefore that the Egyptians worshipped the ox, the sheep, and the ichneumon, on account of their use and benefit, as the Lemnians did larks, for discovering the eggs of caterpillars and breaking them; and the Thessalians storks, because, as their land produced abundance of serpents, the storks destroyed all of them as soon as they appeared. Hence also they enacted a law, that whoever killed a stork should be banished. But the Egyptians honoured the asp, the weezle, and the beetle, in consequence of observing in them certain dark resemblances of the power of the Gods, like that of the sun in drops of water. For at present, many believe and assert that the weezle engenders by the ear, and brings forth by the mouth, being thus an image of the generation of reason, [or the productive principle of things.] But the genus of beetles has no female; and all the males emit their sperm into a spherical piece of earth, which they roll about thrusting it backwards with their hind feet, while they themselves move forward; just as the sun appears to revolve in a direction contrary to that of the heavens, in consequence of moving from west to east. They also assimilated the asp to a star, as being exempt from old age, and performing its motions unassisted by organs with agility and ease. Nor was the crocodile honoured by them without a probable cause; but is said to have been considered by them as a resemblance of divinity, as being the only animal that is without a tongue. For the divine reason is unindigent of voice, and proceeding through a silent path, and accompanied with† justice, conducts mortal affairs according to it. They also say it is the only animal living in water that has the sight of its eyes covered with a thin and transparent film, which descends from his forehead, so that he sees without being seen, which is likewise the case with the first God. But in whatever place the female crocodile may lay her eggs, this may with certainty be concluded to be the boundary of the increase of the Nile. For not being able to lay their eggs in the water, and fearing to lay them far from it, they have such an accurate pre-sensation of futurity, that though they enjoy the benefit of the river in its access, during the time of their laying and hatching, yet they preserve their eggs dry and untouched by the water. They also lay sixty eggs, are the same number of days in hatching them, and those that are the longest lived among them, live just so many years; which number is the first of the measures employed by those who are conversant with the heavenly bodies.

† Instead of *και δικης*, I read *και μετα δικης*.

"Moreover, of those animals that were honoured for both reasons, we have before spoken of the dog. But the ibis, killing indeed all deadly reptiles, was the first that taught men the use of medical evacuation, in consequence of observing that she is after this manner washed and purified by herself. Those priests also, that are most attentive to the laws of sacred rites, when they consecrate water for lustration, fetch it from that place where the ibis had been drinking; for she will neither drink nor come near unwholesome or infected water; but with the distance of her feet from each other, and her bill she makes an equilateral triangle. Farther still, the variety and mixture of her black wings about the white represents the moon when she is gibbous.

"We ought not, however, to wonder if the Egyptians love such slender similitudes, since the Greeks also, both in their pictures and statues, employ many such like resemblances of the Gods. Thus in Crete, there was a statue of Jupiter without ears. For it is fit that he who is the ruler and lord of all things, should hear no one.† Phidias also placed a dragon by the statue of Minerva, and a snail by that of Venus at Elis, to show that virgins require a guard, and that keeping at home and silence become married women. But the trident of Neptune is a symbol of the third region of the world, which the sea possesses, having an arrangement after the heavens and the air. Hence also, they thus denominated Amphitrite and the Tritons. The Pythagoreans likewise adorned numbers and figures with the appellations of the Gods. For they called the equilateral triangle Minerva Coryphagenes, or begotten from the summit, and Tritogeneia, because it is divided by three perpendiculars drawn from the three angles. But they called the *one* Apollo, being persuaded to this by the obvious meaning of the word Apollo [which signifies a privation of multitude] and by the simplicity of the monad.‡ The duad they denominated strife and audacity; and the triad justice. For since injuring and being injured are two extremes subsisting according to excess and defect, justice through equality has a situation in the middle. But what is called the tetractys, being the number 36, was, as is reported, their greatest oath, and was denominated the world. For this number is formed from the composition of the four first even, and the four first odd numbers, collected into one sum.§

† *i.e.* Should be perfectly impartial.

‡ Instead of διπλοτατοις μοναδος as in the original, which is nonsense, it is necessary to read, as in the above translation απλοτητι της μοναδος.

§ For 2+4+6+8=20; and 1+3+5+7=16; and 20+16=36.

If therefore the most approved of the philosophers did not think it proper to neglect or despise any occult signification of a divine nature when they perceived it even in things which are inanimate and incorporeal, it appears to me, that they in a still greater degree venerated those peculiarities depending on manners which they saw in such natures as had sense, and were endued with soul, with passion, and ethical habits. We must embrace therefore, not those who honour these kings, but those who reverence divinity through these, as through most clear mirrors, and which are produced by nature, in a becoming manner, conceiving them to be the instruments or the art of the God by whom all things are perpetually adorned. But we ought to think that no inanimate being can be more excellent than one that is animated, nor an insensible than a sensitive being, not even though some one should collect together all the gold and emeralds in the universe. For the divinity is not ingenerated either in colours, or figures, or smoothness; but such things as neither ever did, nor are naturally adapted to participate of life, have an allotment more ignoble than that of dead bodies. But the nature which lives and sees, and has the principle of motion from itself, and a knowledge of things appropriate and foreign to its being, has certainly derived an efflux and portion of that wisdom, which, as Heraclitus says, considers how botb itself, and the universe is governed. Hence the divinity is not worse represented in these animals, than in the workmanships of copper and stone, which in a similar manner suffer corruption and decay, but are naturally deprived of all sense and consciousness. This then I consider as the best defence that can be given of the adoration of animals by the Egyptians.

Witb respect however to the sacred vestments, those of Isis are of various hues; for her power is about matter, which becomes and receives all things, as light and darkness, day and night, fire and water, life and death, beginning and end; but those of Osiris are without a shade and have no variety of colours, but have one only which is simple and luciform. Hence when the latter have been once used, they are laid aside and preserved; for the intelligible is invisible and intangible. But the vestments of Isis are used frequently. For sensible things being in daily use and at hand, present us with many developments and views of their different mutations: but the intellectual perception of that which is intelligible, genuine, and holy, luminously darting through the soul like a coruscation, is attended with a simultaneous contact and vision of its object. Hence Plato and Aristotle call this part of philosophy epoptic or intuitive, indicating that those who have through the exercise of the reasoning power soared beyond these doxastic, mingled and all-various natures, raise themselves to that first, simple, and immaterial principle,

and passing into contact with the pure truth which subsists about it, they consider themselves as having at length obtained the end of philosophy.† And that which the present devoted and veiled priests obscurely manifest with great reverence and caution is that this God is the ruler and prince of the dead, and is not different from that divinity who is called by the Greeks Hades and Pluto, the truth of which assertion not being understood, disturbs the multitude, who suspect that the truly sacred and holy Osiris dwells in and under the earth, where the bodies of those are concealed who appear to have obtained an end of their being. But he indeed himself is at the remotest distance from the earth, unstained, unpolluted, and pure from every essence that receives corruption and death. The souls of men however, being here encompassed with bodies and passions, cannot participate of divinity except as of an obscure dream by intellectual contact through philosophy. But when they are liberated from the body, and pass into the invisible, impassive, and pure region, this God is then their leader and king, from whom they depend, insatiably beholding him, and desiring to survey that beauty which cannot be expressed or uttered by men; and which Isis, as the ancient discourse evinces, always loving, pursuing, and enjoying fills such things in these lower regions as participate of generation with every thing beautiful and good."

And lastly, the Emperor Julian, in a fragment of an Oration or Epistle on the duties of a priest, has the following remarks on religiously venerating statues: "Statues and altars, and the preservation of unextinguished fire, and in short, all such particulars, have been established by our fathers as symbols of the presence of the gods; *not that we should believe that these symbols are Gods, but that through these we should worship the Gods.* For since we are connected with body, it is also necessary that our worship of the Gods should be performed in a corporeal manner; but they are incorporeal. And they indeed have exhibited to us as the first of statues, that which ranks as the second genus of Gods from the first, and which circularly revolves round the whole of heaven.‡ Since, however, a corporeal worship cannot even be paid to these, because they are naturally unindigent, a third kind of statues was devised on the earth, by the worship of which we render the

† For τελοσ εχειν φιλοσοφιαν, it is necessary to read as in the translation, τελος εχειν φιλοσοφιας.

‡ Meaning those divine bodies the celestial orbs, which in consequence of participating a divine life from the incorporeal powers from which they are suspended, may be very properly called *secondary Gods.*

Gods propitious to us. For as those who reverence the images of kings, who are not in want of any such reverence, at the same time attract to themselves their benevolence; thus also those who venerate the statues of the Gods, who are not in want of any thing, persuade the Gods by this veneration to assist and be favourable to them. For alacrity in the performance of things in our power is a document of true sanctity; and it is very evident that he who accomplishes the former, will in a greater degree possess the latter. But he who despises things in his power, and afterwards pretends to desire impossibilities, evidently does not pursue the latter, and overlooks the former. For though divinity is not in want of any thing, it does not follow that on this account nothing is to be offered to him. For neither is he in want of celebration through the ministry of *words*. What then? Is it therefore reasonable that he should be deprived of this? By no means. Neither therefore is he to be deprived of the honour which is paid him through *works;* which honour has been legally established, not for three, or for three thousand years, but in all preceding ages, among all nations of the earth.

"But [the Galilæans will say,] O! you who have admitted into your soul every multitude of dæmons, whom, though according to you they are formless and unfigured, you have fashioned in a corporeal resemblance, it is not fit that honour should be paid to divinity through such works. *How, then, do not we [heathens] consider as wood and stones those statues which are fashioned by the hands of men? O more stupid than even stones themselves! Do you fancy that all men are to be drawn by the nose as you are drawn by execrable dæmons, so as to think that the artificial resemblances of the Gods are the Gods themselves?* Looking therefore to the resemblances of the Gods, we do not think them to be either stones or wood; for neither do we think that the Gods are these resemblances; since neither do we say that royal images are wood, or stone, or brass, nor that they are the kings themselves, but the images of kings. Whoever, therefore, loves his king, beholds with pleasure the image of his king; whoever loves his child is delighted with his image and whoever loves his father surveys his image with delight.† Hence also, he who is a lover of divinity gladly surveys the statues and images of the

† Dr. Stillingfleet quotes this part of the extract, in his answer to a book entitled *Catholics no Idolaters*, and calls Julian the devout emperor.

Gods; at the same time venerating and fearing with a holy dread the Gods who invisibly behold him.†

† "Dio Chrysostome (says Dr Stillingfleet in the before-cited work, p. 414) at large debates the case about images, in his Olympic Oration; wherein he first shows, that all men have a natural apprehension of one supreme God the father of all things; and that this God was represented by the statue made by Phidias of Jupiter Olympius, for so he said παρ' ῳ νυν εσμεν, *before whom we now are*; and then describes him to be the king, ruler, and father of all, both Gods and men. This image he calls the most blessed, the most excellent, the most beautiful, the most beloved image of God. He says there are four ways of coming to the knowledge of God, by nature, by the instructions of the poets, by the laws, and by images; but neither poets, nor lawgivers, nor artificers were the best interpreters of the deity, but only the philosophers who both understood and explained the divine nature most truly and perfectly. After this, he supposes Phidias to be called to account for making such an image of God, as unworthy of him; when Iphitus, Lycurgus, and the old Eleans, made none at all of him, as being out of the power of man to express his nature. To this Phidias replies, that no man can express mind and understanding by figures, or colours, and therefore they are forced to fly to that in which the soul inhabits, and from thence they attribute the seat of wisdom and reason to God, having nothing better to represent him by. And by that means joining power and art together, they endeavour by something which may be seen and painted, to represent that which is invisible and inexpressible. But it may be said, we had better then have no image or representation of him at all. No, says he; for mankind doth not love to worship God at a distance, but to come near and feel him, and with assurance to sacrifice to him and crown him. Like children newly weaned from their parents, who put out their hands towards them in their dreams as if they were still present; so do men out of the sense of God's goodness and their relation to him, love to have him represented as present with them, and so to converse with him. Thence have come all the representations of God among the barbarous nations, in mountains, and trees, and stones."

The same conceptions also about statues are entertained by the Brachmans in Benares on the Ganges. For Monsieur Bernier when he was at their university, and was discoursing with one of the most learned men among them, proposed to him the question about the adoration of their idols, and reproaching him with it as a thing very unreasonable, received from him this remarkable answer: "We have indeed in our temples many different statues, as those of Brahma, Mahaden, Genick, and Gavani, who are some of the chief and most perfect Deutas (or Deities); and we have also many others of less perfection, to whom we pay great honour, prostrating ourselves before them, and presenting them flowers, rice, oyles, saffron, and the like, with much ceremony. But we do not believe these statues to be Brahma or Bechen, etc. themselves, but only their images and representations, and we only give them that honour on account of the beings they represent. They are in our temples, because it is necessary in order to pray well, to have something before our eyes that may fix the mind. And when we pray, it is not the statue we pray to, but he that is represented by it." The Brahmans have also another way of defending their worship of statues, of which the same author gives the following account: "That God, or that sovereign being whom they call Achar (immutable) has produced or drawn out of his own substance, not only souls,

The Catholics have employed arguments similar to these, in defence of the reverence which they pay to the images of their saints. Indeed, it is the doctrine of the Church of England,† that the Catholics form the same opinions of the saints whose images they worship as the Heathens did of their Gods; and employ the same outward rites in honouring their images, as the Heathens did in the religious veneration of their statues. Thus as the Heathens had their *tutelar Gods*, such as were Belus to the Babylonians and Assyrians, Osiris and Isis to the Egyptians, and Vulcan to the Lemnians, thus also the Catholics attribute the defence of certain countries to certain saints. Have not the saints also to whom the safeguard of particular cities is committed, the same office as the *Dii Præsides* of the Heathens? Such as were at Delphi, Apollo; at Athens, Minerva; at Carthage, Juno; and at Rome, Quirinus. And do not the saints to whom churches are built and altars erected correspond to the Dii Patroni of the Heathens? Such as were in the Capitol, Jupiter, in the temple at Paphos, Venus, in the temple of Ephesus, Diana. Are not likewise, our Lady of Walsingham, our Lady of Ipswich, our Lady of Wilsdon, and the like, imitations of Diana Agrotera, Diana Coriphea, Diana Ephesia, Venus Cypria, Venus Paphia, Venus Gnidia, and the like? The Catholics too, have substituted for the marine deities Neptune, Triton, Nereus, Castor and Pollux, Venus, etc. Saint Christopher, Saint Clement, and others, and especially our Lady, as she is called by them, to whom seamen sing *Ave Maris Stella.* Neither has the fire escaped their imitation of the Pagans. For instead of Vulcan and Vesta, the inspective guardians of fire according to the Heathens, the Catholics have substituted Saint Agatha, on the day of whose nativity they make letters for the purpose of extinguishing fire. Every artificer likewise and profession has a special saint in the place of a presiding God. Thus scholars have Saint Nicholas and Saint Gregory; painters Saint Luke; nor are soldiers in want of a saint corresponding to Mars, nor lovers of one who is a substitute for Venus.

All diseases too have their special saints instead of Gods, who are invoked as possessing a healing power. Thus the venereal disease has

but also whatever is material and corporeal in the universe, so that all things in the world are but one and the same thing with God himself, as all numbers are but one and the same unity repeated." Bernier Memoires, tome 3, p.171. 178.

From this latter extract it appears that the Brachmans as well as the ancient Egyptians, believe that the supreme principle is all things. According to the best of the Platonists likewise, this principle is *all things prior to all.* For by being *The One*, it is *all things* after the most *simple* manner, *i.e.* so as to transcend all multitude.

† See its *Homilies*, tome 2, p. 46.

Saint Roche; the falling sickness Saint Cornelius, the toothach Saint Apollin, etc. Beasts and cattle also have their presiding saints: for Saint Loy (says the Homily) is the horse-leach, and Saint Antony the swineherd, etc. The Homily adds,† "that in many points the Papists exceed the Gentiles in idolatry, and particularly in honouring and worshipping the relics and bones of saints, which prove that they be mortal men and dead, and therefore no Gods to be worshipped, which the Gentiles would never confess of their Gods for very shame." And after enumerating many ridiculous practices of the Catholics in reference to these relics, the Homily concludes with observing, "that they are not only more wicked than the Gentile idolaters, but also no wiser than asses, horses, and mules, which have no understanding."

In the second place the Homilies show‡ that the rites and ceremonies of the Papists in honouring and worshipping their images or saints, are the same with the rites of the Pagans. "This, say they, is evident in their pilgrimages to visit images which had more holiness and virtue in them than others. In their candle-religion, burning incense, offering up gold to images, hanging up crutches, chairs, and ships, legs, arms and whole men and women of war, before images, as though by them, or saints (as they say) they were delivered from lameness, sickness, captivity, or shipwrack." In spreading abroad after the manner of the Heathens, the miracles that have accompanied images. "Such an image was sent from heaven, like the Palladium, or Diana of the Ephesians. Such an image was brought by angels. Such a one came itself far from the east to the west, as Dame Fortune fled to Rome. Some images though they were hard and stony, yet for tender-heart and pity wept. Some spake more monstrously than ever did Balaam's ass, who had life and breath in him. Such a cripple came and saluted this saint of oak, and by and by he was made whole, and here hangeth his crutch. Such a one in a tempest vowed to Saint Christopher, and scaped, and behold here is his ship of war. Such a one, by Saint Leonard's help, brake out of prison, and see where his fetters hang. And infinite thousands more miracles by like, or more shameless lies were reported."

After all this, I appeal to every intelligent reader, whether the religion of the Heathens, according to its genuine purity as delineated in this Introduction, and as professed and promulgated by the best and wisest men of antiquity, is not infinitely preferable to that of the Catholics? And whether it is not more holy to reverence beings the immediate

† Tome 2, p. 54.

‡ p. 49

progeny of the ineffable principle of all things, and which are eternally centred and rooted in him; and to believe that in reverencing these, we at the same time reverence *the ineffable*, because they partake of his nature, and that through these as media we become united with him,† than to reverence men, and the images of men, many of whom when living, were the disgrace of human nature? The Church of England as we see prefers the Pagans to the Papists; and I trust that every other sect of Protestant Christians will unanimously subscribe to her decision. And thus much in defence of the theology of Plato, and the religious worship of the Heathens.

It now remains that I should speak of the following work, of its author, and the translation. The work itself then is a scientific development of the deiform processions from the ineffable principle of things, and this, as it appears to me in the greatest perfection possible to man. For the reasoning is every where consummately accurate, and deduced from self-evident principles; and the conclusions are the result of what Plato powerfully calls geometrical necessities. To the reader of this work indeed, who has not been properly disciplined in Eleatic and Academic studies, and who has not a genius naturally adapted to such abstruse speculations, it will doubtless appear to he perfectly unintelligible, and in the language of critical cant, nothing but jargon and revery. This, however, is what Plato the great hierophant of this theology predicted would be the case, if ever it was unfolded to the multitude at large. *"For as it appears to me, says he, there are scarcely any particulars which will be considered by the multitude more ridiculous than these; nor again, any which will appear more wonderful and enthusiastic to those who are naturally adapted to perceive them."*‡

In his seventh epistle also he observes as follows: "Thus much, however, I shall say respecting all those who either have written or shall write, affirming that they know those things which are the objects of my study (whether they have heard them from me or from others, or whether they have discovered them themselves) that they have not heard

† The ineffable principle of things, as is demonstrated in the *Elements of Theology* [TTS vol I], is beyond self-subsistence. Hence the first ineffable evolution from him consists of self-subsistent natures. As we therefore are only the dregs of the rational nature, many media are necessary to conjoin us with a principle so immensely exalted above us. And these media are the golden chain of powers that have deified summits, or that have the ineffable united with the effable.

‡ Σχεδον γαρ ως εμοι δοχει, ουκ εστι τουτων προς τους πολλους καταγελαστοτερα ακουσματα, ου δ' αν προς τους ευφυεις θαυμαστοτερα τε και ενθουσιαστικωτερα. Epist. 2.

any thing about these things conformable to my opinion: for I never have written nor ever shall write about them.† For a thing of this kind cannot be expressed by words like other disciplines, but by long familiarity, and living in conjunction with the thing itself, a light‡as it were leaping from a fire will on a sudden be enkindled in the soul, and there itself nourish itself." And shortly after he adds; "But if it appeared to me that the particulars of which I am speaking could be sufficiently communicated to the *multitude* by writing or speech, what could we accomplish more beautiful in life than to impart a mighty benefit to mankind, and lead an intelligible nature into light, so as to be obvious to all men? I think, however, that an attempt of this kind would only be beneficial to a few, who from some small vestiges previously demonstrated are themselves able to discover these abstruse particulars. But with respect to the rest of mankind, some it will fill with a contempt by no means elegant, and others with a lofty and arrogant hope that they shall now learn certain venerable things.§

The prediction of Plato therefore, has been but too truly fulfilled in the fate which has attended the writings of the best of his disciples, among whom Proclus certainly maintains the most distinguished rank. This indeed, these disciples well knew would be the case; but perceiving that the hand of Barbaric and despotic power was about to destroy the schools of the philosophers, and foreseeing that dreadful night of ignorance and folly which succeeded so nefarious an undertaking, they

† Plato means by this, that he has never written perspicuously about *intelligibles* or *true beings*, the proper objects of intellect.

‡ This light is a thing of a very different kind from that which is produced by the evidence arising from truths perceptible by the multitude, as those who have experienced it well know.

§ Τασονδε γε μην περι ταντων εχω φραζειν των γεγραφοτων και γραψαντων, οσοι φασιν ειδεναι περι ων εγω σπουδαζω, ειτ' εμον ακηκοοτες, ειτ' αλλων, ειθ' ως ευροντες αυτοι, τουτους ουκ εστι κατα γε την εμην δοξαν περι του πραγματος επαϊειν ουδεν, ουκ ουν εμον γε περι αυτων εστι συγγραμμα, ουδε μη ποτε γενηται· ρητον γαρ ουδαμως εστιν, ως αλλα μαθηματα, αλλ' εκ πολλης συνουσιας γιγνομενης περι το πραγμα αυτο, και του συζην, εξαιφνης οιον απο πυρος πηδησαντος (lege πηδησαν) εξαφθεν φως, εν τη ψυχη γενομενον αυτο εαυτο ηδη τρεφει. - Ει δε μοι εφαινετο γραπτεα θ' ικανως ειναι προς τους πολλους και ρητα, τι τουτου καλλιον επεπρακτ' αν ημιν εν τω βιω, η τοις τι ανθρωποισι μεγα οφελος γραψαι, και την φυσιν εις φως τοις πασι προσαγαγειν; αλλ' ουτε ανθρωποις ηγουμαι την επιχειρησιν περι αυτων λεγομενην αγαθον, ει μη τισιν ολιγοις, οποσοι δυνατοι ανευρειν αυτοι δια μικρας ενδειξεως· των τε δη αλλων, τοις μεν καταφρονησεως ουκ ορθως εμπλησειεν αν ουδαμη εμμελους, τους δε υψηλης και χαυνης ελπιδος, ως σεμν' απτα μεμαθηκοτας.

benevolently disclosed in as luminous a manner as the subject would permit, the arcana of their master's doctrines, thereby, as Plato expresses it, giving assistance to Philosophy, and also preserving it as a paternal and immortal inheritance, to the latest posterity. Proclus in the first book of this work has enumerated the requisites which a student of it ought to possess; and it is most certain that he who does not possess them, will never fathom the depths of this theology, or perceive his mind irradiated with that admirable light, mentioned by Plato in the foregoing extract, and which is only to be seen by that eye of the soul which is better worth saving than ten thousand corporeal eyes.

With respect to the diction of Proclus in this work, its general character is that of purity, clearness, copiousness, and magnificence; so that even the fastidious critic, who considers every Greek writer as partially barbarous who lived after the fall of the Macedonian empire, must, however unwillingly, be forced to acknowledge that Proclus is a splendid exception. The sagacious Kepler, whose decision on this subject, outweighs in my opinion, that of a *swarm* of modern critics, after having made a long extract from the commentaries of Proclus on Euclid, gives the following animated encomium of his diction. "Oratio fluit ipsi torrentis instar, ripas inundans, et cœca dubitationum vada gurgitesque occultans, dum mens plena majestatis tantarum rerum, luctatur in angustiis linguæ, et conclusio nunquam sibi ipsi verborum copia satisfaciens, propositionum simplicitatem excedit." *i.e.* "His language flows like a torrent, inundating its banks, and hiding the dark fords and whirlpools of doubts, while his mind full of the majesty of things of such a magnitude, struggles in the straits of language, and the conclusion never satisfying him, exceeds by the copia of words, the simplicity of the propositions." If we omit what Kepler here says about the struggle of the mind of Proclus, and his never being satisfied with the conclusion, the rest of his eulogy is equally applicable to the style of the present work, so far as it is possible for the beauties of diction to be combined with the rigid accuracy of geometrical reasoning.

With respect to the life of Proclus, it has been written with great elegance by his disciple Marinus; and a translation of it by me prefixed to my version of the commentaries of Proclus was published in 1788. From the edition of that life therefore, by Fabricius, the following particulars relative to this very extraordinary man are extracted, for the information of the reader who may not have the translation of it in his possession. According to the accurate chronology then of Fabricius, Proclus was born at Byzantium in the year of Christ 412, on the 6th of the Ides of February, and died in the one hundred and twenty-fourth year after the reign of the emperor Julian, on the seventeenth day of the

Attic Munichion, or the April of the Romans, Nicoragoras the junior, being at that time the Athenian archon. His father Patricius, and his mother Marcella, were both of them of the Lycian nation, and were no less illustrious for their virtue than their birth. As soon as he was born, his parents brought him to their native country Xanthus, which was sacred to Apollo. And this, says Marinus, happened to him by a certain divine allotment. "For, he adds, I think it was necessary that he who was to be the leader of all sciences, should be nourished and educated under the presiding deity of the Muses." The person of Proclus was uncommonly beautiful; and he not only possessed all the moral and intellectual virtues in the highest perfection, but the vestigies of them also, which are denominated the physical virtues, were clearly seen, says Marinus, in his last and shelly vestment the body. Hence he possessed a remarkable acuteness of sensation, and particularly in the most honourable of the senses, sight and hearing, which, as Plato says, were imparted by the Gods to men for the purpose of philosophizing, and for the well being of the animal life. In the second place, he possessed so great a strength of body, that it was neither injured by cold, nor any endurance of labours, though these were extreme, both by night and day. In the third place, he was, as we have before observed, very beautiful. "For not only," says Marinus, "did his body possess great symmetry, but a living light as it were beaming from his soul was efflorescent in his body, and shone forth with an admirable splendour, which it is impossible to describe." Marinus adds, "Indeed he was so beautiful, that no painter could accurately exhibit his resemblance; and all the pictures of him which were circulated, though very beautiful, were very inferior to the beauty of the original." And in the fourth place, he possessed health in such perfection, that he was not ill above twice or thrice in the course of so long a life as seventy-five years.

Such then were the corporeal prerogatives which Proclus possessed, and which may be called the forerunners of the forms of perfect virtue. But he possessed in a wonderful manner what Plato calls the elements of a philosophic genius.† For he had an excellent memory, learned with facility, was magnificent and graceful, and the friend and ally of truth, justice, fortitude, and temperance. Having for a short space of time applied himself in Lycia to grammar, he went to Alexandria in Egypt, and was there instructed in rhetoric by Leonas who derived his lineage from Isaurus, and in grammar by Orion, whose ancestors discharged the sacerdotal office among the Egyptians, and who composed elaborate treatises on that art. A certain good fortune however, says Marinus,

† See the sixth book of the *Republic* of Plato.

brought him back to the place of his nativity. For on his return his tutelar Goddess exhorted him to philosophy, and to visit the Athenian schools. Having therefore, first returned to Alexandria and bade farewell to rhetoric, and the other arts which he had formerly studied, he gave himself up to the discourses of the philosophers then resident at Alexandria. Here, he became an auditor of Olympiodorus,† the most illustrious of philosophers, for the sake of imbibing the doctrine of Aristotle; and was instructed in the mathematical disciplines by Hero, a religious man, and eminently skilful in teaching those sciences. Proclus however, not being satisfied with the Alexandrian schools, went to Athens, "with a certain splendid procession," says Marinus, "of all eloquence and elegance, and attended by the Gods that preside over philosophy, and by beneficent dæmons. For that the succession of philosophy, might be preserved legitimate and genuine, the Gods led him to the city over which its inspective guardian presides." Hence Proclus was called *κατ' εξοχην by way of eminence*, the *Platonic Successor*. At Athens therefore, Proclus fortunately met with the first of philosophers, Syrianus,‡ the son of Philoxenus, who not only much assisted him in his studies, but made him his domestic as to other concerns, and the companion of his philosophic life, having found him such an auditor and successor as he had a long time sought for, and one who was capable of receiving a multitude of disciplines and divine dogmas.

In less than two whole years therefore, Proclus read with Syrianus all the works of Aristotle, *viz.* his logic, ethics, politics, physics, and theological science. And being sufficiently instructed in these as in certain *proteleia*, or things preparatory to initiation, and lesser mysteries, Syrianus led him to the mystic discipline of Plato, in an orderly progression, and not according to the Chaldean oracle with a transcendent foot. He likewise enabled Proclus to survey in conjunction with him, says Marinus, truly divine mysteries, with the eyes of his soul free from material darkness, and with undefiled intellectual vision. But Proclus employing sleepless exercise and attention, both by night and by

† This Olympiodorus is not the same with the philosopher of that name whose learned commentaries on certain dialogues of Plato are extant in manuscript; as in these, not only Proclus, but Damascius who flourished after Proclus is celebrated.

‡ This truly great man appears to have been the first who thoroughly penetrated the profundity contained in the writings of the more ancient philosophers, contemporary with and prior to Plato, and to have demonstrated the admirable agreement of their doctrines with each other. Unfortunately but few of his works are extant.

day, and synoptically and judiciously committing to writing what he heard from Syrianus, made so great a progress in a little time, that by then he was twenty-eight years of age, he had composed a multitude of works and among the rest his commentaries on the *Timæus* which are truly elegant and full of science. But from such a discipline as this, his manners became more adorned; and as he advanced in science he increased in virtue.

Marinus after this, shows how Proclus possessed all the virtues in the greatest possible perfection; and how he proceeded from the exercise of the political virtues, which are produced by reason adorning the irrational part as its instrument, to the cathartic virtues which pertain to reason alone, withdrawing from other things to itself, throwing aside the instruments of sense as vain, repressing also the energies through these instruments, and liberating the soul from the bonds of generation. He then adds, "Proclus having made a proficiency, through these virtues, as it were by certain mystic steps, recurred from these to such as are greater and more telestic, being conducted to them by a prosperous nature and scientific discipline. For being now purified, rising above generation, and despising its thyrsus-bearers,† he was agitated with a divinely inspired fury, about the first essences, and became an inspector of the truly blessed spectacles which they contain. No longer collecting discursively and demonstratively the science of them, but surveying them as it were by simple intuition, and beholding through intellectual energies the paradigms in a divine intellect, assuming a virtue which can no longer be denominated prudence, but which ought rather to be called wisdom, or something still more venerable than this. The philosopher therefore energizing according to this virtue, easily comprehended all the theology of the Greeks and Barbarians, and that which is adumbrated in mythological fictions, and brought it into light, to those who are willing and able to understand it. He explained likewise every thing in a more enthusiastic manner, and brought the different theologies to an harmonious agreement. At the same time also, investigating the writings of the ancients, whatever he found in them genuine, he judiciously

† Socrates in the *Phædo* of Plato, Orphically calls the multitude thyrsus-bearers as living Titanically. For the thyrsus, says Olympiodorus, (in MS. comment in Phæd.) is a symbol of material and partible fabrication, on account of its divulsed continuity, whence also it is a Titanic plant. "For it is extended, says he, before Bacchus, instead of his paternal sceptre, and through this they call him into a partial nature." He adds, "Besides the Titans are thyrsus-bearers; and Prometheus concealed fire in a reed, whether by this we are to understand that he draws down celestial light into generation, or impels soul into body, or calls forth divine illumination, the whole of which is ungenerated, into generation."

adopted; but if he found any thing of a spurious nature, this, he entirely rejected as erroneous. He also strenuously subverted by a diligent examination such doctrines as were contrary to truth. In his associations too with others, he employed no less force and perspicuity. For he was a man laborious beyond measure; as, in one day, he gave five, and sometimes more lectures, and wrote as many as seven hundred verses. Besides this, he went to other philosophers, and spent the evening in conversation with them. And all these employments he executed in such a manner as not to neglect his nocturnal and vigilant piety to the Gods, and assiduously supplicating the sun when rising, when at his meridian altitude, and when he sets."

Marinus farther observes of this most extraordinary man, "that he did not seem to be without divine inspiration. For words similar to the most white and thick-falling snow† proceeded from his wise mouth, his eyes appeared to be filled with a fulgid splendour, and the rest of his face to participate of divine illumination. Hence Rufinus, a man illustrious in the *Republic*, and who was also a man of veracity, and in other respects venerable, happening to be present with him when he was lecturing, perceived that his head was surrounded with a light. And when Proclus had finished his lecture, Rufinus rising, adored him, and testified by an oath the truth of the divine vision which he had seen."

Marinus also informs us, "that Proclus being purified in an orderly manner by the Chaldean purifications, was an inspector of the lucid Hecatic visions, as he himself somewhere mentions in one of his writings. By opportunely moving likewise a certain Hecatic sphærula,‡ he procured showers of rain, and freed Athens from an unseasonable heat. Besides this, by certain phylacteria or charms, he stopt an

† Alluding to the beautiful description given of Ulysses in the third book of the Iliad, v 22 which is thus elegantly paraphrased by Pope.

> But when he speaks what elocution flows!
> Soft as the fleeces of descending snows
> The copious accents fall with easy art;
> Melting they fall and sink into the heart.

‡ Nicephorus in his commentary on Synesius de Insomniis, p. 362, informs us that the Hecatic orb is a golden sphere, which has a sapphire stoue inclosed in its middle part, and through its whole extremity characters, and various figures. He adds, that turning this sphere round, the Chaldeans perform invocations which they call Iyngæ. Thus too, according to Suidas, the magician Julian of Chaldæa, and Arnuphis the Egyptian brought down showers of rain, by a magical power. And by an artifice of this kind, Empedocles was accustomed to restrain the fury of the winds; on which account he was called αλεξανεμος, *an expeller of wind.*

earthquake, and had made trial of the divining energy of the tripod, having been instructed by certain verses respecting its failure. For when he was in his fortieth year, he appeared in a dream to utter the following verses:

> High above æther there with radiance bright,
> A pure immortal splendour wings its flight;†
> Whose beams divine with vivid force aspire,
> And leap resounding from a fount of fire.

And in the beginning of his forty-second year he appeared to himself to pronounce with a loud voice these verses:

> Lo! on my soul a sacred fire descends,
> Whose vivid power the intellect extends;
> From whence far beaming thro' dull body's night,
> It soars to æther deck'd with starry light;
> And with soft murmurs thro' the azure round,
> The lucid regions of the Gods resound.

Besides, he clearly perceived that he belonged to the Mercurial series; and was persuaded from a dream, that he possessed the soul of Nichomachus the Pythagorean."‡

† This signifies that the divine splendour which is the cause of the prophetic energy, would leave the earth, in consequence of the then existing inaptitude of persons, places, and instruments, to receive it.

‡ No opinion is more celebrated, than that of the metempsychoses of Pythagoras; but perhaps no doctrine is more generally mistaken. By most of the present day it is exploded as ridiculous; and the few who retain some veneration for its founder, endeavour to destroy the literal, and to confine it to an allegorical meaning. By some of the ancients this mutation was limited to similar bodies; so that they conceived the human soul might transmigrate into various human bodies, but not into those of brutes. And this was the opinion of Hierocles, as may be seen in his Commentary on the Golden Verses. But why may not the human soul become connected with subordinate, as well as with superior lives, by a tendency of inclination? Do not similars love to be united; and is there not in all kinds of life something similar and common? Hence when the affections of the soul verge to a baser nature, while connected with a human body, these affections, on the dissolution of such a body, become enveloped as it were, in a brutal nature, and the rational eye, in this case, clouded by perturbations, is oppressed by the irrational energies of the brute, and surveys nothing but the dark phantasms of a degraded imagination. But this doctrine is vindicated by Proclus with his usual acuteness, in his admirable Commentaries on the *Timæus*, lib. 5 p. 329, as follows: "It is usual, says he, to enquire how human souls can descend into brute animals. And some indeed, think that there are certain similitudes of men to brutes, which they call savage lives: for they by no means think it possible that the rational essence can become

In the last place, Marinus adds, "that the lovers of more elegant studies may be able to conjecture from the position of the stars under which he was born, that the condition of his life, was by no means among the last or middle, but among the first orders, we have thought fit to expose in this place the following scheme of his nativity."

Ascendant	8° 19′ ♈	Midheaven	4° 42′ ♍
	☉ 16° 26′ ♒		☽ 17° 29′ ♊
	☿ 4° 42′ ♒		♀ 0° 23′ ♓
	♂ 29° 50′ ♐		♃ 24° 41′ ♉
	♄ 24° 23′ ♉		☊ 24° 33′ ♍
The new moon preceeding his birth			8° 51′ ♒

And thus much for the life of Proclus.

With respect to the translation of the following work, *On the Theology of Plato*, I can only say that I have endeavoured to render it as faithful as possible, and to preserve the manner as well as the matter of the author; this being indispensably necessary, both from the importance of the subject, and the scientific accuracy of the reasoning with which it is discussed. I have added a seventh book in order to render the work complete; for without the development of the mundane Gods, and the more excellent genera their perpetual attendants, it would obviously be incomplete. From the catalogue of the manuscripts in the late French

the soul of a savage animal. On the contrary, others allow it may be sent into brutes, because all souls are of one and the same kind; so that they may become wolves and panthers, and ichneumons. But true reason indeed, asserts that the human soul may be lodged in brutes, yet in such a manner, as that it may obtain its own proper life, and that the degraded soul may, as it were, be carried above it, and be bound to the baser nature by a propensity and similitude of affection. And that this is the only mode of insinuation, we have proved by a multitude of arguments, in our Commentaries on the *Phædrus*. If however, it be requisite to take notice, that this is the opinion of Plato, we add that in his *Republic* he says, that the soul of Thersites assumed an ape, but not the body of an ape: and in the *Phædrus*, that the soul descends into a savage life, but not into a savage body. For life is conjoined with its proper soul. And in this place he says it is changed into a brutal nature. For a brutal nature is not a brutal body, but a brutal life."

King's library, it is evident that Proclus had written a seventh book† as some chapters of it are there said to be extant in that library. These I have endeavoured, but without success, to obtain. The want of this seventh book by Proclus, will doubtless be considered by all the friends of Greek literature, and particularly by all who are lovers of the doctrines of Plato, as a loss of no common magnitude. It is, however, a fortunate circumstance, that in the composition of the seventh book I have been able to supply the deficiency arising from the want of that which was written by Proclus, in a great measure from other works of Proclus himself, and particularly from his very elegant and scientific commentaries on the *Timæus* of Plato. So that I trust the loss is in some measure supplied; though I am sensible, very inadequately, could it be compared with the book which was written by a man of such gigantic powers of mind as Proclus, and who had also sources of information on the subject, which at the present period, it is impossible to obtain.

The Greek text of Proclus abounds with errors, so that the emendations which I have made, and the deficiencies which I have supplied in this volume, amount to more than four hundred. And the Latin translation of Portus is so very faulty, as to be almost beyond example bad. Having discovered this to be the case, and having in so many places corrected the original, I scarcely think that any of my critical enemies will be hardy enough to say, that any part of this volume was translated from the Latin, where the Greek could be obtained. As I am conscious however, that in what is now offered to the public, I had no other view than to benefit those who are capable of being benefited by such sublime speculations; that wishing well to all mankind, and particularly to my country, I have laboured to disseminate the philosophy and theology of Plato, as highly favourable to the interests of piety and good government, and most hostile to lawless conduct and revolutionary principles; and that I have done my best to deserve the esteem of the wise and worthy part of mankind, I am wholly unconcerned as to the reception it may meet with from the malevolent, though I wish for the approbation of the candid critics of the day. For in all my labours I have invariably observed the following Pygthagoric precept: "Do those things which you judge to be beautiful, though in doing them you should be without renown; for the rabble is a bad judge of a good thing."‡

† Proclus at the end of the first book of this work says, "that divine names will be accurately discussed by him, when he comes to speak of partial powers." This, however, is not done by him in any one of the six books that are extant; which shows that another book is wanting.

‡ Ποιει α κρινεις ειναι καλα, καν ποιων μελλης αδοξησειν· φαυλος γαρ κριτης καλου πραγματος οχλος. Demophilus.

An explanation of certain terms which are unusual, or have a meaning different from their common acceptation, and which there was a necessity of introducing in the translation of this work.

COMPOSITE, *συνθετος*. I have used the word composite instead of *compounded*, because the latter rather denotes the mingling than the contiguous union of one thing with another, which the former, through its derivation from the Latin word *compositus*, solely denotes.

DEMIURGUS OF WHOLES, *δημιουργος των ολων*. The artificer of the universe is thus denominated, because he produces the universe so far as it is a *whole*, and likewise all the wholes it contains, by his own immediate energy; other subordinate powers co-operating with him in the production of parts. Hence he produces the universe *totally* and *at once*.

DESIRE, *επιθυμια*. Is an irrational appetite solely directed to external objects, and to the gratification arising from the possession of them.

DIANOIA, *διανοια*, from whence *dianoetic*, is the discursive energy of reason; (*διεξοδικη του λογου ενεργεια*) or according to its most accurate signification, it is that power of the soul which reasons scientifically, deriving the principles of its reasoning from intellect, or the power which sees truth intuitively.

DOXASTIC, formed from *δοξα opinion*, is the last of the gnostic powers of the rational soul; and knows *that* a thing is, but is ignorant of the cause of it, or *why* it is. The knowledge of the *διοτι* or *why* a thing is, being the province of dianoia.

GUEST, *ξενος*. This word, in its more ample signification in the Greek, denotes a *stranger*, but properly implies one who receives another, or is himself received at an entertainment. In the dialogues of Plato therefore, (and consequently in this work of Proclus when he cites the dialogues in which this word occurs) wherever one of the speakers is introduced as a *ξενος*, I have translated this word *guest*, as being more conformable to the genius of Plato's dialogues, which may be justly called rich mental banquets, and consequently the speakers in them may be considered as so many guests. Hence in the *Timæus*, the persons of that dialogue are expressly spoken of as guests from having been feasted with discourse.

HYPARXIS, *υπαρξις*. The first principle, or foundation as it were, of the essence of a thing. Hence, also, it is the summit of essence.

IMPARTICIPABLE, αμεθεκτος. One thing is said to be imparticipable with respect to another, to which it is superior, when it is not consubsistent with it.

INTELLECTUAL PROJECTION. The immediate energy of intellect is thus denominated, because it is an intuitive perception, or an immediate darting forth, as it were, to its proper object, the intelligible.

MONAD, μονας, in divine natures is that which contains *distinct*, but at the same time *profoundly-united* multitude, and which produces a multitude exquisitely allied to itself. But in the sensible universe, the first monad is the world itself, which comprehends in itself all the multitude of which it is the cause in conjunction with the cause of all. The second monad is the inerratic sphere. In the third place, the spheres of the planets succeed, each of which is also a monad, comprehending an appropriate multitude. And in the fourth and last place are the spheres of the elements, which are in a similar manner monads. All these monads likewise are denominated ολοτητες, *wholenesses*, and have a perpetual subsistence.

PERMANENCY, στασισ. The proper word for rest, in Greek, is ηρεμια. And Simplicius justly observes, that not every στασις is ερεμια, but that only which is after motion. This word is employed by Plato in the *Sophista*, to express one of the five genera of being, *viz. essence, permanency*, (στασις), *motion, sameness*, and *difference*; in which place it evidently does not signify rest.

PHANTASY or *Imagination*, φαντασια, is, μορφωτικη νοησις, *i.e. a figured intelligence*, because all the perceptions of this power are *inward* and not external, like those of sense, and are accompanied with *figure*.

PSYCHICAL, ψυχικος, *i.e. pertaining to soul*, in the same manner as *physical* is *something pertaining to nature*.

REASON, λογος. This word in Platonic writers signifies either that inward discursive energy called reasoning; or a certain productive and seminal principle; or that which is indicative and definitive of a thing. Hence λογοι or *reasons* in the soul, are, gnostically producing principles.

UNICAL, ενιαιος, that which is characterized by unity.

UNIFORM, ενοειδης. This word when it occurs in Proclus, and other Platonic writers, signifies that which has the form of *The One*, and not as in Johnson, that which keeps its tenour, or is similar to itself.